

**A phenomenology of perceptions and experiences  
of community, crime and anti-social behaviour in  
Bryn Mawr, Wales.**

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University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.  
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## DECLARATIONS

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis explores the lived realities and social meanings attached to the phenomenon of crime and anti-social behaviour in Bryn Mawr, a semi-urban geographical location in Wales. The primary lens through which this study was viewed was the perspective of the body and embodiment, and differing approaches to this theme are interwoven within the data analysis. This research draws primarily on participant observations mainly associated with a preventative activities project run by the Youth Offending Services and Communities First, together with interviews with a number of parents, young people and practitioners in the area. The thesis aims to situate people's understandings and experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour in the context of the immediate social, cultural and spatial interactions within Bryn Mawr, with a particular emphasis on young people.

Initially, the thesis explores peoples' understandings of community and discusses how this might affect their feelings regarding crime and anti-social behaviour. This introduces the particularities of the social geography of the locale. The thesis then describes how crime and anti-social behaviour is defined, and further develops concepts of power, abjection and reflexive embodiment. The next two chapters of the thesis examine crime and anti-social behaviour, via the perspectives of the dramaturgical body and the phenomenological body.

The thesis therefore analyses the complex ways in which crime and anti-social behaviour are enacted in Bryn Mawr, and explores the intersections between identity, power and place. This thesis argues for alternative representations of young people involved in anti-social behaviour that question the master narratives of young people as abject others and one

that acknowledges the fluid nature of identity construction. The conclusion then calls for a radical (re)discovery of the female body as a starting point for thought, and as a place from which a new ethics of relating can emerge.

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I don't like listening to long speeches at the Oscars or Brit Awards and tend to switch the T.V. off. Likewise, I don't like extensive and trite acknowledgement sections at the beginning of books. So, I'll be brief. My children, I am sorry for coming across as a slightly deranged wild woman whilst pacing up and down the kitchen ruminating on some concept that has no relevance whatsoever to your beautiful lives. My own mother and father – thank you for having the children to stay so that I could finish it in peace. Anel and Nathan, thank you for taking over the supervision, the philosophical discussions, lunches and the white wine spritzers. Thank you to the 'B' Floor Gang and all my friends for being you. And Gerald, a massive thanks to you for just 'everything'.

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## THESIS OVERVIEW

This overview outlines the main research questions and the theoretical and methodological approaches which have been chosen towards the research.

This research project involves carrying out an extensive study of the experiences and perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour in Bryn Mawr, a semi-urban area in Wales. Bryn Mawr will be understood in terms of community, neighbourhood and locality. The central research question can perhaps best be clarified as; “How are crime and anti-social behaviour experienced, perceived and socially constructed in the locality and community of Bryn Mawr?” The research was guided by the following sub-questions:

- How are crime and anti-social behaviour defined, experienced and perceived by different sections of the community? How do these definitions relate to practitioners’ definitions?
- How does crime and anti-social behaviour effect people’s everyday lives?
- How are identities and a sense of community produced and reproduced in Bryn Mawr?
- How is Bryn Mawr perceived in spatial terms, and how does crime and anti-social behaviour relate to space and place?
- What are the implications from this study?
- How does this study contribute to criminological ‘knowledge’ and how does it relate to future possibilities in the criminological enterprise?

The research strategies which were chosen in order to best answer the research questions are outlined as follows:

Firstly, a review of related literature was an ongoing process throughout the duration of the PhD. As my research emerged out of the genre of cultural criminology and existentialist criminology, it has been important to stay abreast of new publications. This relates to both theory and method which are both continually developing in this area.

Secondly, the data-collection methods were qualitative, and based upon an ethnographic study of Bryn Mawr. These can be divided into the following methods:

- Non-participant and participant observation
- Semi-structured and open ended interviews
- Focus groups
- 'Go-alongs' or mobile interviews

Whilst this research hopes to contribute to the wider discipline of criminology by offering up a unique ethnographic study undertaken in a location as yet unstudied, it can nevertheless be understood as emerging out of and contributing to the particular genres of cultural criminology and existentialist criminology. Although these genres also draw on some already existing perspectives in criminology; such as symbolic interactionism, the phenomenology of transgression and sub-cultural theories, it also aims to further develop them and situate them in social groups within late modernity. Additionally, it embraces interdisciplinary perspectives in order to reinvigorate the discipline of criminology. Cultural criminology also encourages the use of alternative methods such as Kusenbach's concept of

the 'go-along' with the aim of getting at the everyday 'lived experience' of crime and deviance. This research aimed to contribute to the genres of cultural criminology and existentialist criminology and the wider discipline in the following ways:

- By re-orientating existing trajectories in criminological studies of space and place
- By focusing on embodiment and the body as a lens through which to address crime and anti-social behaviour as lived, performed and socially constructed
- By using a unique blend of theoretical approaches and triangulated methods

Similarly, as criminology is drawing from anthropology, sociology and cultural studies, so is the reverse happening, and ethnographies of deviance within these disciplines are an emerging trend. In this respect, this ethnographic study can also be seen as contributing to anthropology, sociology and cultural studies.

Right from the start, the great collector is struck by the confusion, by the scatter, in which the things of the world are found.

(Walter Benjamin 1999: 211)

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

To do something interdisciplinary it's not enough to choose a "subject" and gather around it two or three sciences. Interdisciplinarity consists in creating a new object that belongs to no one.

(Roland Barthes 1984)

### **Bryn Mawr**

There remains a significant lack of in-depth scholarship which engages with the lived experiences of young people growing up in Wales in the twenty first century, particularly with regards to how identities are enacted and how young people experience and use place. This thesis hopes to address this by looking at experiences and perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour in Bryn Mawr, a semi-urban place in a rural county. More specifically, it will explore issues of community, identity and difference, performance and spatiality.

The research focused on an area just outside a coastal town in a primarily rural county in Wales which has an approximate population of 78,000 people. The county has six market towns, villages and small hamlets. These are linked by roads and there are local bus services linking the towns and key villages which are used by local people to get to work and school although it is widely accepted that there are issues with accessing services across the county. There are rail links to the north, but none to the south.



Bryn Mawr has a long history of human settlement spanning over two thousand years with a wealth of archaeological remains in the immediately surrounding areas which attracts visitors. In the eighteenth century, a smuggling ring used the area to store goods such as rum and tobacco in order to avoid customs in the main town. In the middle of the nineteenth century the population stood at around 240 and it largely consisted of people working in rural industries such as sawyer, saddler, weaver, rope maker and tanner. There were also agriculture labourers. This hamlet changed dramatically in the 1920s with the building of social housing in an art deco style. Before these were built, there were approximately 200 residents. These older housing estates still form a large part of what is now known as the "Old Bryn Mawr."

As the estates grew, there was ongoing concern from existing residents about the growth and new people moving in. Newspaper articles dating back to the 1950s express residents' issues about the transformation of a village into a suburb and the nostalgia people felt for times past. An interesting fact is that in 1957, the residents voted against the building of a neighbourhood unit consisting of shops and recreational facilities, despite the council's willingness to provide one. The need for further recreational activities was a key factor in debates concerning youth from 2004 onwards when residents raised concerns over anti-social behaviour. In 1975, local councillor made public the fact that the original houses had been left in a terrible state of disrepair by the local council, referring to the estates as a potential slum, but noting that the tenants were 'model tenants' and calling for the council to take action. As more properties were built, older ones fell into disrepair which left the occupiers disgruntled and resentful of incomers; a pattern which has continued. By 1983,

there was already a population of around 5,000. Further building has occurred in the twenty first century with several new estates, despite existing residents' protests regarding utilities provision and safety, notably in 2003. Bryn Mawr also has a church, chapels and meeting house, a local pub, post office and shops. Today in Bryn Mawr, residential accommodation still consists of mainly local authority housing which include flats, terraced houses and semi-detached properties in groups of estates. However, there are a number of occupier owned detached residences as well which maintain a relatively high value on the market, and some occupiers have purchased their homes. Bryn Mawr has a low proportion of student housing considering the fact that it is situated on the outskirts of a university town with student accommodation highly sought after and scattered throughout the town and surrounding areas.

The county's economy is primarily reliant on tourism, agriculture, education (there are two universities) and public sector services, such as local government and the NHS. However, although educational attainment and training is higher than the national average, there is a lower proportion of people in full time work than the Wales and GB averages. Figures available from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings indicate that in 2009, the median annual income for employee jobs in Ceredigion was £17,584 compared to the Wales median of £19,134. (<http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/utilities/action/act :52>) Due to the proportion of jobs in the service industry and public sector, public spending cuts are already beginning to have a notable impact on the county's employment pattern.

Prior to the onset of the research, Bryn Mawr belongs to a small area in Wales which was demarcated as a pocket of deprivation in the *Communities First Programme* in 2006. Deprivation is a broader concept than poverty and in this instance refers to issues arguably created by other factors than a lack of money, such as a deficiency in opportunities and resources. The Welsh Index of Deprivation measures deprivation in the following areas: income, employment, housing, education, health, community safety, physical environment and access to services. It then ranks the Lower Super Output Areas on each domain and overall. Individual geographical areas are then placed in banded rankings of 10%, but it is not measured on a ratio scale. (Ibid: 46, <http://gov.wales/docs/statistics/2014/141126-wimd-2014-summary-en.pdf> ) In 2010, the wards in which Bryn Mawr is situated ranked 3 and 4 in the county for LSOAs, whilst other geographically close by areas ranked from 13 to 44, indicating a large variation. Perhaps ironically, in terms of community safety, Bryn Mawr was considered the safest part of the overall town, although it ranked high on the index in terms of education, employment and physical environment (Ibid: 47-48). In terms of education, the residents in Bryn Mawr have the same access to education as other residents in the wider area and the rare exclusions from school are not solely applied to young people living in Bryn Mawr.

Along with other parts of the town, there is an indication of overall relative deprivation in Bryn Mawr when compared to the rest of the county, yet this is historically due to a number of factors including a high proportion of housing stock which is pre-1933 and was failing to meet ideal housing standards. However, when compared to other areas in Wales such as the South and North coastal towns, the county overall is ranked low on the Welsh Index.

Along with the extensive regeneration of housing stock in Bryn Mawr by the housing association, the main town itself has been subject to extensive regeneration in recent years (<http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/110210regenaberleafleten.pdf>) which will additionally benefit surrounding residential areas by increasing access to services within and outside the immediate areas.

Car ownership is considerably below the national average for Wales in Bryn Mawr which is a key factor in poor access to services. Consequently, service provision in the area has significant resource implications. Additionally, poor transport networks and a lack of access to resources mean that young people are more likely to gather in areas marginal to the residences to socialise. Prior to the research period, Bryn Mawr was subject to a dispersal order which further exacerbated social exclusion and this research demonstrated that the young people involved were consequently more likely to be at risk of becoming involved in more dangerous situations and serious crime in the town as they sought out other areas to meet up.

Due to the indicators of deprivation in Bryn Mawr as the research commenced, it was expected that accounts of class and socio-economic change might form an important aspect of the research. Yet, despite many of the interview questions centring on these issues, participants were not forthcoming with any relevant responses. Indeed, some of the younger participants had little understanding of issues pertaining to class or economics, nor the impact upon their lives. For instance, when younger participants were asked about housing, they were more impressed by friends who lived in a new-build local authority

house than those whose parents had purchased an older property. Issues of class were more complex; many of the parents who lived in local authority housing had come from middle class families and had professional parents themselves such as a university lecturer, psychologist. Likewise, some of the young people encountered through the YOT preventative activities programme had professional parents who worked at the universities or local hospital. Two people interviewed were from settled traveller-gypsy families. This mobility through the standard categorisations of social classes made any attempt at a coherent analysis of class extremely difficult without conducting a much larger and longer term study. Further, to have examined class and socio-economics would not have been faithful to the data collected, as people were generally dismissive of the relevance of income and any sense of class, although on occasion individuals were referred to in terms of their employment status, which was often transient as people moved in and out of work. The vast majority of criminological research has been conducted on the activities of the lower classes; "For it is concerns about this 'dangerous class' that have dominated criminological thought since at least the beginning of modern society." (Hopkins Burke 2003: 6). In this study, legitimate income could not necessarily be equated with class or social standing, so it was perhaps a welcome relief to turn attention to other aspects of the experience and perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Additionally, the 2001 census revealed that 40% of residents in Bryn Mawr were Welsh speakers, although by the time of the research this figure would have dropped due to a wave of people moving into the estates from other parts of the UK. It was considered that language and culture would be a highly relevant theme emerging from the research; the

differences between Welsh and non-Welsh families. However, the data revealed that these were not the most important issues to young people and parents in the area in considerations of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Within the county, Bryn Mawr continues to have a reputation for being an area rife with crime, anti-social behaviour and drug problems. Although the crime statistics show a prevalence of anti-social behaviour occurring in Bryn Mawr, other crimes such as property crime are relatively low compared to other areas in Wales. The viewpoint then of crime being ubiquitous in Bryn Mawr is based upon a number of interwoven factors. These partial truths stem from a blurring of the boundaries between what constitutes crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour, dubious local 'knowledges' and a history of media attention in the local newspaper reporting various offences committed by residents in the area. This has undoubtedly been exacerbated perhaps by the general onslaught of attention to crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour through social networking and television directed at Joe Public in Britain. The ever growing volumes of crime television shows broadcasted at prime viewing times, and the endless media headlines reporting various levels of deviant behaviour from knife crime to unruly neighbours, reflects the fact that crime and anti-social behaviour are dominant issues in the collective consciousness of the population of Britain.

### **Situating the study**

Criminology's attempts to explain the causes of crime have historically been vast and diverse; from the wide-ranging sociological studies which include Durkheim's (1969) and Merton's (1938) concept of anomie, control theories, the work of the Chicago School, radical criminology, routine activities theory, feminist criminology and labelling perspectives to the psychological explanations influenced by mainstream psychology to name but a few. Inextricably woven into the fabric of criminology are issues of social control and power; "[Criminology] includes within its scope the processes of making laws, of breaking laws, and of reacting towards the breaking of laws." (Sutherland and Cressey 1955: 3).

In the last two decades, there has been an increasing awareness of the shared ontological roots of criminology and bureaucracy and the proliferation of administrative criminology (Hogg 1996; Garland and Sparks 2000; Ferrell *et al.* 2004; Young 2011), which is discussed later in thesis. Other criminologists have attempted to explicitly distance themselves from this aspect of the discipline, with calls for further resistance. For instance, two relatively new genres self-label as 'Cultural Criminology' and 'Existentialist Criminology' have been developed; although the two are not mutually exclusive. Criminology continues to have narrative, social structural and quantitatively rigorous faces. (Braithwaite 2011: viii) Yet although "criminology is booming" (Bosworth & Hoyle 2011: 1), the discipline might be seen as becoming more intellectually divided than ever before. Bosworth & Hoyle observed that as well as the overall strengths of the discipline, there is division internally which can range from disagreements about methodology to debates over aims and even subject matter. This has lead them to conclude that criminology might be disintegrating at the exact instant that it is so lively and popular. (Ibid: 2-3) Some of these fundamental disagreements play out in

the debates between policy researchers and critical criminologists (see, for example, Hope & Walters 2008, Ferrell et al. 2004). One prescription offered by Bosworth & Hoyle to secure a future for criminology is to acknowledge the fissures and for the discipline to become more reflexive. However, there is also a need for scholars to become more reflexive about their own individual motivations when choosing methods, topics and theoretical inclinations. This thesis is written in the context of the discipline's general disparity and affiliates itself loosely to the genres of critical cultural and existentialist criminology, following Addelson (1990: 121-2), who suggested that philosophers become sociologists and vice-versa:

*The post enlightenment question is, how are we to study a human world in which meaning and morality, science and truth are all in the process of construction? We must give a double answer, one that takes account of method and metaphysics within the disciplines and our authority outside of them. Both philosophers and sociologists have to make the double answer together.*

Whilst embracing postmodernist theory, embodied symbolic interactionism, and phenomenological approaches to its subject, this thesis nevertheless refuses to ignore the mobilisation of power and its diverse and diffuse processes of domination and subordination. Also, it hopes to draw attention to the fact that amid these broader debates on methodologies and theoretical approaches, the distinctiveness of the character of different locations in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour is frequently overlooked.

Originally ASBOs appeared in the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) to act as a deterrent based on the rationale that bad behaviour becomes crime if left unchallenged. ASBOs were therefore expected to help with the increasing crime rate in Britain's youth (Crime and Disorder Act, 1998, c. 37: Part 1). In relation to youth crime specifically, the links between



young people and anti-social behaviour has consequently developed into a singular narrative – a damaging trope that can obfuscate rather than disclose lived realities. Krudy and Stewart (2004) perhaps best illustrated this issue by summarising cases in which young people were given ASBOs. One boy, aged 13, had not had any previous contact with police, nor had he been in trouble at school. Despite this, he was given an ASBO due to bad behaviour and being noisy on the estates in a group. The local authorities had been covertly filming him playing noisily on the estates where he lived with other teenagers, but had not notified his family or involved youth offending services, instead wasting considerable resources. He was subsequently summoned to the magistrates court, awarded an ASBO, banned from walking through any of the estates or meeting with five other young people who had also been covertly filmed, with no non-punitive interventions made beforehand. Squires and Stephens (2005: 115) explain the issues relating to the open-endedness of anti-social behaviour definitions; “The merit of this definition is supposed to be the scope that it allows local communities and CDRP agencies to set priorities and targets according to local problems and concerns. Yet the disadvantage of this approach is precisely the implicit prior specification of a stereotypically ‘yob’-centred set of priorities and youthful ‘usual suspects’.” With reference to Bryn Mawr, this issue will be discussed later in the thesis.

The original aims of this thesis were to understand why crime and anti-social behaviour were seen to be prevalent in a particular geographical location on the outskirts of a Welsh town, and to clarify the issues underlying and causing these phenomena. However, as the research progressed, the aims shifted slightly, and my interests developed into questions regarding the nature of the ‘community’, the ‘natural attitudes’ towards to crime and anti-

social behaviour and social controls, the authenticity and performance of certain behaviours, and how the geographies of the area played a part in the lived experiences and understandings of crime and anti-social behaviour, including the perception of freedom. The geographical location of Bryn Mawr is interesting in that it cannot be categorised as either urban or rural; the town centre with all of its trappings such as high street shops, industrial estates, offices and parks can be reached on foot in ten minutes, whilst expansive areas of open countryside and the rural landscape are a twenty minute walk away. This has provided a unique and exciting semi-urban locale as a spatial context for investigation, which is unusual because criminology has tended to focus on either urban crime or rural crime; the two being presented in the literature as distinct entities which embody differentiated social and cultural constructs.

The study was initially encouraged by the concern of local authorities as to why Bryn Mawr was perceived as a key problematic area in the county, at which core services and policing were targeted. A Research Studentship was provided in the hope of gaining a more diverse and community-led understanding of issues relating to crime and anti-social behaviour in this semi-urban setting. An inclusive understanding meant that all aspects of the community, together with members of the local authorities involved would theoretically be included in the research process, regardless of age, gender, social class, nationality, race or religion. However, as the fieldwork progressed, it became clear that a fully inclusive study would detract from what became a key area of interest – that of young people. The field was narrowed somewhat to families; in other words, parents and young people. All other people included in the study were involved in implementing service delivery in some way

and this group consisted of youth workers from the Youth Offending Services, Communities First Officers, Policing and Community Team members, local Policing and Community Safety Officers, a drug worker, a founding member of the Neighbourhood Watch, General Practitioners (doctors), housing association officials and so on.

Part of the potential practical importance of this project was that it would examine plural perceptions and experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour within the dynamics of a community, and assesses the effectiveness of policy in relation to law enforcement and intervention, especially with regard to young people. Originally, one of the key aims was to situate this study of a community within the context of contemporary politics and policy, both national and local. Yet solely policy orientated research limits some of the possibilities regarding what the participants wish to discuss around particular topics, how data is produced and how this informs the theory and philosophy which surface. What is important to note here is that the theoretical and political positions expressed through research are *also* socially produced and can reflexively unmask the processes of power, domination and subjection that lie between political discourse, policy making and bureaucracy, and the people that are subjects of those discourses. Additionally, many young people affected by these processes are typically unable to express their own opinions and feelings in legitimate ways. This thesis is therefore perhaps ambitiously positioned somewhere in the tension between the practical and the theoretical; on the one hand, there is the genuine desire to potentially make improvements in the real lived lives of the subjects through the research, even if only by providing them with an opportunity to express their understandings and

experiences of Bryn Mawr, and on the other, to generate ideas and different ways of understanding crime and anti-social behaviour at the epistemological and ontological levels.

In order to achieve this, the research questions had to branch off from the primary question of how crime, criminality and anti-social behaviour are defined, experienced and perceived by different people living in Bryn Mawr. The central research question was clarified as; “How are crime, criminality and anti-social behaviour experienced and perceived in the Bryn Mawr?” This necessarily had to consider groups defined by their age, gender and social class as well as those defined by their status as criminal, anti-social, non-criminal, or victims of crime and anti-social behaviour.

### **Fieldwork as a process**

When I first entered the field, I began by carrying out some casual non-participant observation, in order to get a feel for the area and the subjects. Despite its somewhat iniquitous reputation in the main town, I entered the field by going to the local pub with a colleague and spent a few entertaining afternoons watching people fall off benches and compare tattoos. However, it all felt a bit vague and poorly organised. As Goffman put it; “Encounters are everywhere, but it is difficult to describe sociologically the stuff that they are made of.” (1972: 18) So, I reconsidered the bold belief that I might be able to recruit

unsuspecting residents into my study who were at best mildly tipsy, and at worst unable to stand.

I was also interested in focusing the study on young people; perhaps because at the time, I was teaching on an undergraduate course on youth crime and justice and having come from a background in anthropology, particularly enjoyed reading ethnographies and theories of sub-cultures. I was lucky enough to get work as a volunteer with the Youth Offending Services, and began to help out on the Youth Offending Team's preventative activities project, which was aimed at young people who were either at risk of offending, or who had already been through the system for either low level crime or anti-social behaviour.

On entering this field, I immediately noticed how willing the young people were to play a role; strutting, gesturing, and using props, which were simple 'found' things from wherever they happened to be at the time. These performances were spontaneous reflections of how they perceived and related to people and happenings around them. This initial observation triggered an interest in embodiment, performance and place, which ultimately influenced the trajectory of the thesis. The observations I was making in the fieldwork begged to be interpreted in such different ways, and as an anthropologist, I found myself edging back to some of my favourite ethnographic texts in order to think with them. I also kept referring back to one of the first criminological texts I had ever read; Ferrell and Hamm's (1998) *Ethnography at the Edge*. I decided to read more texts by Ferrell and through this, discovered the wider genre of cultural criminology, followed then by the work of Jack Katz

(1988; 2000) and Stuart Henry and Dragan Milovanovic's (1996) *Constitutive Criminology*. I felt a sense of relief that there were other people 'out there' of a similar mindset. For me, this was what it was all about; simply getting stuck in there and seeing what serendipitous happenings occurred in the field and freely allowing theory and philosophy to emerge from the combination of data and who I was as a subjective researcher. I realised that ultimately, I was primarily an anthropologist, and at this point in my life I was simply looking at crime and anti-social behaviour at home. To be content and productive in my work, I had to use this to my advantage, rather than try to ignore it and somehow 'become' only a criminologist interested in policy above everything else. I also realised that phenomenological approaches to crime and anti-social behaviour did not have to be inspired by Husserl and Schutz, but could also be driven by the ideas of Heidegger, Nietzsche, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. I began to think through a theoretical approach which combined and developed aspects of social constructivism, embodied symbolic interactionism and existential phenomenology and delivered a number of papers outlining these ideas in order to gain feedback. Then in 2010, I came across the newly published *Existentialist Criminology* (Crewe and Lippens 2009). It was somewhat a combination of an enlightening 'eureka' moment, and a gloomy disappointment that others had got there before me.

Meanwhile, fieldwork was challenging in a number of ways. I was finding it to be emotionally charged labour and it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain my energy levels in the field, and would come home feeling exhausted. Sometimes, the exhaustion was so severe; I would barely be able to walk. This culminated in April 2010, when I came home

one day from attending a community play scheme. I felt so drained and put it down to spending much of the day engaging with a heroin addict who was behaving abusively towards her children. When I got home, all I wanted to do was to immerse myself in a hot bath and 'wash off' the distress experienced during the course of that day. Soon afterwards, I collapsed and was hospitalised. Fieldwork came to an abrupt halt, and I was signed off work and university for ten months with an illness.

Returning to fieldwork was difficult. So much had changed in the period during which I was signed off. The Youth Offending Team preventative activities programme had changed their goals and the target group for the next year. Many of the lads I had met and was hoping to interview the previous year had left the programme. However, one of the new groups was specifically aimed at young people from Bryn Mawr, and was being described as a sort of 'therapy' group. Also, there were many more females, which pleased me because I was interested in whether there were differences between male and female experiences in perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour. The females requested a 'girl only' group and this was eventually facilitated by the combined energies of the Youth Offending Team and Communities First, although it only got up and running during the last phase of the fieldwork and after I had already collected most of the data.

I had a frantic last burst of data collection as I was still feeling fragile and experiencing terror that the illness would recur, so there was a sense of urgency about collecting as much data as possible, whereas previously I had been quite relaxed about it. Although people were

often unreliable and I had to rearrange interviews several times before they showed up, I managed to get another twenty five or so interviews done in a relatively short period of time. During the first phase of fieldwork, I had taken my time in order to build relationships so that individuals felt more comfortable about speaking with me, but during the second time, I became more aggressive with my strategy. I also offered free cinema tickets to any young people who were willing to be interviewed as an incentive.

Throughout the two periods of fieldwork, the interview questions remained roughly the same, although when interesting information was revealed by the participants, either in formal interviews or unsolicited 'chats' during fieldwork, I would try to follow this up in later interviews with others in order to confirm it. I usually began formal interviews with questions regarding the community, such as whether participants felt that they belonged or were a part of the community. I became interested in how identities and the idea of community was produced and reproduced in Bryn Mawr in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour. In current social theory, the concepts of identity and community themselves are heavily contested. Initially, I explored the range of political and academic discourses on community. In the first decade of the twenty first century, there was a proliferation of communitarian ideas across the board in government policy making, which initially came from academic institutions in the USA and liberal left thinking. In the UK, the New Labour Government who was still in power during the data collection period, certainly attempted to fix domestic problems by mobilising the rhetoric of the 'community', and the idea of the community has become the popular solution to the problem of crime. These ideas can be seen not only directly in legislation such as The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, The Clean



Neighbourhoods and Environments Act 2005 and The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, but also in the Communities First Agenda, Community Safety discourses, and Neighbourhood Watch schemes. Recently, of course, the coalition government led by David Cameron has reproduced the rhetoric of community used by Tony Blair through the concept of *The Big Society*. There is, however, a noticeable disjuncture between on the one hand - the idea of the singular inclusive national community of Britain, projected by both New Labour and now the coalition government; a community which is theoretically subject to the same laws, policies and interventions, and on the other hand, the actual state of the UK. The UK is culturally diverse, plural and distinctly exclusive – a collection of sub-groups clearly demarcated by the government and media from primarily a singularly dominant perspective. The fact is, despite assertions amongst social theorists and anthropologists that processes of globalisation have led to the increasing homogenisation of localities (Giddens 1990), no one group of people living in a geographical area is identical to another, nor are they effected by such processes in the same manner, so we are always ultimately talking about different places or locales, and even more particularly, neighbourhoods experienced and socially constructed by mixes of individuals.

Further, as Anderson has pointed out; “all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.” (1983: 6). This idea has become evident, not only in the way that different people living in Bryn Mawr imagine the community, but also in the way that local authorities and practitioners respond to its problems. It is incontrovertible that, at any given time, it is *how* multiple factors

combine that leads to the summation of the ways in which people living in the location of Bryn Mawr experience and perceive crime, deviance and anti-social behaviour. Certainly, issues of identity and community are woven into the fabric of the thesis, as the voices of the participants speak through it. The voices which spoke through the processes of interviewing and in casual discussions during periods of participant observation did not reflect upon policy as such, but seemed to offer something more profound; the young people in particular wanted to talk about what it was like to grow up and live in a place alongside peers who struggled emotionally with who they were, and where they felt they belonged. Amongst longer term residents who had themselves been raised in Bryn Mawr, a sense of nostalgia was evident, a yearning for a time when people could leave their front doors open, and children could play out safely until late. Some experienced a deep loss of the sense of an idyllic community. For others communities were transient and continually emerging and shifting; for instance, through sub-cultural groups.

These issues were followed up with questions relating directly to understandings of crime and anti-social behaviour. I asked participants questions about what types of behaviours were understood to be problematic, and were people fearful of certain behaviours? I linked this to issues of how both intolerance and problem behaviours are socially and politically constructed; for example how is crime and anti-social behaviour defined by policy makers, local agencies and partnerships? I considered how these social constructs might be related to what is 'real' or actually perceived to be happening, and how this might have implications for the way crime and anti-social behaviour are addressed.

I asked extensive questions relating to spaces and places in Bryn Mawr; for instance, I raised questions pertaining to which specific locations in Bryn Mawr were avoided or frequented, and for what reasons. Albert Reiss (1986), in his work on community crime careers, suggested that a neighbourhood's crime pattern, as a unique historical process, is reflected in the combination of consequences resulting from the interaction of multiple actors, who have a practical consciousness of locale. Muir has said that; "[A] sense of place can be characterised in two ways. First, places may be regarded as having their own intrinsic personalities... second, the sense of place can be identified as the emotional attachments to localities developed by individuals and communities in the course of living and growing within the setting of home." (1999: 273). Additionally, I would assert that any sense of place is also experienced in an embodied manner. As well as alluding to emotional and kinaesthetic experiences, it also refers to visual and auditory perceptions. So, to fully understand the phenomena of crime and anti-social behaviour at the level of the individual and the community, they must be related to experiences and perceptions of space and place; "...it is meaningless to imagine any happening without reference to a locality. Place is evidently an integral part of existence." (Norberg-Schulz 1980: 6). To understand how Bryn Mawr is an individually, socially and temporarily constructed place(s) then, necessarily formed one of the predominant and powerful research questions of this thesis, engaging both with lived embodied experience and 'hard space' as well as imagined and discursive space.

The research developed outward from these ideas, and the data represents an accumulation of qualitative methods including interviews and participant and non-participant observation. The theoretical approaches are eclectic, drawing from the genres of cultural and existentialist criminology, the symbolic interactionist tradition, as well as directly from philosophy, but all have one unifying theme; that of the body and embodiment. This thesis has evolved, then, into an interdisciplinary exploration of the 'essence' and embodied nature of crime, deviance and anti-social behaviour in relation to Bryn Mawr, which will be presented in a further seven chapters.

### **Structure of the thesis**

Chapter One - the current chapter - is primarily reflexive and is thus written in the first person. It introduces the key research questions and the methodological and theoretical trajectory of the study. Chapter Two explores the chosen research methods, and justifies them both from a reflexive viewpoint, and their applicability to the research questions. The relevant literature on the specific qualitative methods is reviewed throughout the chapter. The main research methodology – ethnography - is discussed in detail, but I have also paid attention to the individual qualitative methods utilised which often come under the umbrella of ethnographic research. Briefly, these are: non-participant and participant observation, semi-structured and open ended interviewing, focus groups and the 'Go-Along' or mobile interview. The second section of the chapter discusses ethical considerations and the specific problems encountered in relation to phenomenological ethnographic research.

It addresses the different methods, looking at ethical issues and challenges particular to each one. Finally, a summary concludes the chapter.

Chapter Three describes the development of the theoretical and philosophical approaches engaged with throughout this thesis. Firstly, it describes the historical approaches to the body and embodiment, and makes suggestions as to why the body and embodiment have been ignored in criminology, whilst other social sciences such as sociology and anthropology have embraced them. It then discusses in-depth the theoretical perspectives of cultural criminology, constitutive criminology and existentialist criminology. Following some of the concepts of post-structuralism, its main aim is to explain and justify a theoretical approach that is informed by the wider interdisciplinary endeavours of existential phenomenology, symbolic interactionism and social constructivism. This approach acknowledges the lived experience and performative nature of crime and anti-social behaviour simultaneously with the social construction of them, and uses the lens of the body through which to explore them. This chapter describes the concept of dualism which has permeated the social sciences, and in particular, criminology. It asks how dualism has governed how we have approached the criminological subject – as either a physical body reflective of a criminal nature – or as a criminal mind, and how looking at the body and embodiment in ways influenced by current thinking in sociology and anthropology can help us to understand crime and anti-social behaviour. I then discuss the different ‘types’ of existential phenomenology, exploring the differences between the works of key existential philosophers such as Heidegger, Nietzsche, Merleau-Ponty and Irigaray, drawing attention

to the concepts which are most applicable to this study. Finally, the chapter will then summarise the theoretical trajectory of the thesis.

Chapter Four discusses the concepts of community, neighbourhood, identity and difference and sets the scene for the following interpretative chapters on definitions of crime and anti-social behaviour, performance, and space and place. One of the first questions I asked of interviewees was related to senses of inclusion or exclusion; how they felt they fitted in to the overall community, or neighbourhood. I was also interested to learn how some people defined themselves as separate from it. I felt that it was an important starting point to establish a 'feel' for the lived locale and was a useful springboard for further questioning. The responses gained from the first few questions in the interview process have helped to provide conclusions on how to describe the locality, sense of community and feelings about crime and anti-social behaviour. This provides a useful background for the following in depth interpretative chapters.

Chapter Five is primarily a descriptive chapter, which examines neighbourhood definitions of crime and anti-social behaviour in Bryn Mawr. Its primary aim is to answer the following questions: How is crime and anti-social behaviour defined, categorised, experienced and perceived by different sections of the community? How does crime and anti-social behaviour effect peoples' everyday lives? How does crime and anti-social behaviour relate to socio-economic conditions? Drawing mainly from data collected through semi-structured and open ended interviews and focus groups, this chapter will discuss the different

perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour from the perspectives of parents and young people in addition to different practitioners' viewpoints. This chapter will focus both on individual biographical accounts and also, how and why these understandings are socially constructed. Part of the interview data uncovered in this chapter aims to offer insights into the reflexive relationship between differing individual experiences and perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour and the information and 'knowledge' individuals are exposed to from other residents in Bryn Mawr, local policing teams and wider agency interventions and policy initiatives. This chapter discusses data collected through interviewing professionals who **were** involved in implementing local policies relating to the locality, and the practitioners who **worked** in the field. It also draws on observations made whilst 'shadowing' practitioners, predominantly members of the Youth Offending Team. It thus aims to explore the definitions, experiences and perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour from the points of view of the professionals and practitioners involved, alongside residents' **opinions. Following this, the similarities and differences in understanding between those who live in Bryn Mawr and those who visit with an agenda were examined.**

Chapter Six interprets data collected from fieldwork such as field notes and interviews. Tying together the work of symbolic interactionists such as Erving Goffman and Victor Turner with existentialist phenomenologists such as Heidegger, Nietzsche, Sartre and Irigaray, it explores the performative and existential nature of crime and anti-social behaviour. This section of the thesis triangulates all the research methodologies in order to arrive at an understanding as to how people produce and co-produce their individual and group identities, and senses of community through both the management of the body and

lived experiences. Here, I look at aspects of a series of individual biographies which range from young people who offend to 'ordinary' residents who are parents of children and young people in order to answer the following questions: How do people describe and interpret the appearance of people they perceive to be criminal or anti-social? What types of interactions do people engage in to affirm 'membership' of a particular social group in Bryn Mawr or beyond?

Chapter Seven examines how the locale of Bryn Mawr is defined, experienced and imagined by people living there, in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour. This chapter draws from data collected from all the research methods; non-participant and participant observation, semi-structured and open ended interviewing including mobile interviews, and focus groups. This chapter hopes to balance individual lived experiences of Bryn Mawr with how a sense of place is also socially constructed, and aims to answer the main related research question: How is Bryn Mawr perceived in spatial terms, and how does crime and anti-social behaviour relate to space and place? Sub-questions include: What are Bryn Mawr's boundaries, both symbolic and geographically - in terms of physical and social geography and territory? Which particular parts of Bryn Mawr are associated most with crime and anti-social behaviour? How does crime and anti-social behaviour affect peoples' movement around Bryn Mawr and use of streets, shops, public house and park? Are there places which are considered dangerous at certain times of the day? Are people happy to walk around or through Bryn Mawr at night? What types of crime and anti-social behaviour do people think are happening there? Are the people who are carrying out the crimes living in Bryn Mawr, or do they come from elsewhere to commit crimes? How is 'community'



defined in relation to space and place? The chapter will close with a summary of the findings, and an assessment of how these types of study can help understand the spatial and temporal dynamics of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Chapter Eight, the conclusion argues for a re-assessment of how we understand anti-social behaviour that is grounded in young peoples' lived embodied experiences, and that is also sensitive to the specific locations in which they co-create and enact their identities, either in support of or in resistance to labelling processes. This final chapter pulls together the interpretations drawn from the data collected, and aims to situate the research findings within the wider field of criminology and assess its contribution to criminological research. It will determine the usefulness of the research methods and theoretical trajectories used in order to gain understandings of the phenomena of crime and anti-social behaviour in particular localities, which may in turn, if shared positively and creatively, be helpful to practitioners and policy makers. In this chapter, I recast the fieldwork as a reflexive embodied field and examine to what extent my presence was also a performance, and how it impacted on the geographical and discursive spaces I encountered. Via a call for a return to the body and embodiment both within criminology and philosophy, I therefore also call for a radical (re)discovery of the female body as a starting point for thought, and as a place from which a new ethics of relating can emerge.

All researchers are to some degree connected to, or part of, the object of their research [and] depending on the extent and nature of these connections, questions arise as to whether the results of research are artefacts of the researcher's presence and inevitable influence on the research process.

(Davies 1998: 3)

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **The methodology and reflections from the field**

#### **Introduction**

Criminology is an academic subject which is now a thriving and growing individual discipline in many universities. It is historically a multidisciplinary endeavour, drawing from disciplines such as sociology, psychology, law, human geography, anthropology and philosophy amongst others. Criminology has thus developed into a rich and diverse subject with established traditions of both quantitative and qualitative research - as Walklate points out, held together by one substantive concern; the study of crime (1998).

As abject and often secret phenomena, crime and deviance are notoriously interesting and tricky areas of study, and Kane has drawn attention to this point; “Crime is an elusive object of desire/knowledge...Like the study of sex and sorcery, crime cannot be easily observed, hence the dangerous aura, and the difficulties of operationalising constancy and control.” (2004: 303-4). Quantitative methods such as surveys, whilst allowing for anonymity in response and therefore potentially higher rates of disclosure, fail to arrive at any deep understanding of the individual ‘*lived* experience’ of crime.<sup>1</sup> Further, the tradition of quantitative research has long been a close ally of positivism (Noaks and Wincup 2004: 5), aiming to explain the causes of criminal behaviour and predict future patterns of crime, which effectively situates crime temporally in the past and future. It is not my intention in this thesis to do either, but rather to describe and reflexively interpret the experiences and perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour from the differing perspectives of people living in and involved with the locality and community of Bryn Mawr. Additionally, criminologists have long argued that quantitative methods merely serve the needs of administrative criminology (see, for example Becker 1963; Matza 1969), and neither is it my intention to do this. Much empirical research carried out today, especially projects which are dependent on governmental funding bodies also utilise qualitative methods or a combination of both qualitative and quantitative, but basically still repetitively serve and support the needs of policy makers rather than the desire for purely intellectual enquiry and the development of theory in criminology. These issues have become the cornerstones of

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<sup>1</sup> Although Becker has observed that the expression ‘lived experience’ is sometimes “...so vague as to be almost vacuous” (2001:74), I refer to it here in terms of individual holistic experiences, which reflect upon the embodied and emotional aspects of experience as different from the potentially purely rational or even arbitrary decisions made, for example, in answering questionnaires. The concept of the ‘lived experience’ will be fully explained later in the thesis.

the critical aspect of contemporary cultural criminology, which has sought to confront, resist and moderate, if not nullify, the apparent obsession with statistics, quantitative data sets and repetitive empiricist research. However, these arguably do nothing more than prop up administrative criminology, whereas contemporary approaches to criminology aim to carry out and promote alternative types of research, which attempt to situate the experience of criminal act in the immediacy of the present (see for example, Ferrell & Sanders 1995; Ferrell 1997; Ferrell et al 2004; Hayward 2004; Hayward & Young 2004; Kane 2004; Morrison 2004; Presdee 2000).

These studies draw from a particular type of qualitative tradition of criminological research originally developed in the United States of America, beginning with the work of the Chicago School, which in addition to its quantitative research, also carried out pioneering ethnographic research on marginalised groups such as gangs, the homeless and prostitutes in the 1920s and 1930s. The Chicago School was to have a strong influence on the direction of the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies in Britain in the 1960s and 1970s, and some of the major contributions to the study of crime and deviance have come from this ethnographic research (see, for example Cohen 1972; Hall & Jefferson 1976).

Hammersley and Atkinson stated simply that research methods need to be chosen according to the research aims and objectives (1994), and Denzin has stressed that “Researchers work outward from their own biographies” (1989: 49). Bearing this in mind, it became clear early on in the research process that qualitative methods would predominate over quantitative, and it was quickly decided that ethnography was the most appropriate

method for carrying out extensive research into experiences of crime, deviance and anti-social behaviour in this particular community setting. I intend to clarify the reasons for making this decision both by making my own epistemological standpoint clear and by justifying the research methods in relation to the research questions.

This chapter, then, represents a very personal methodology informed not only by the subject matter of research, but also by my own academic biography; it is in many ways “...a bending back on itself...a circular process...a spiralling.” (Steier 1991: 2)

### **Epistemological Standpoint**

Firstly, my original intention of beginning fieldwork in Bryn Mawr, with no theoretical or philosophical ‘baggage’, proved impossible and it became clear on entering the field that I already had theoretical, philosophical and political skins that would prove difficult to shed. Finally, I accepted that the methods used and the interpretation of the data collected throughout the social sciences is influenced by the theoretical and political orientation of the researcher, and that my personal history was inevitably going to have an effect not only on the theoretical and methodological approaches to the study, and the themes and interpretive approaches that emerged and interested me personally from the research, but also on the people selected for study in the first place. This does not mean adopting an early use of theories and concepts which may not fit with participants’ perspectives, as Bryman (1988) warned against, but a self-conscious awareness of my own subjectivity right from the beginning of the research process. My personal academic history was based upon my studies as an undergraduate in anthropology and archaeology, and my postgraduate studies

in archaeological research. I was fortunate enough to work with top intellectuals in these fields, some of whom were responsible for changing the entire theoretical trajectory of their disciplines. Obviously for me, this involved critically reading a number of ethnographic studies carried out both at home (in British society), and in other countries. Also, like criminology, archaeology is an interdisciplinary endeavour, drawing from anthropology, sociology, history and human geography, and my Master's thesis was a phenomenological study of a particular place through time. There is an expectation within academia that an individual's research "be related, in terms of some sort of intellectual career to past research experience" (Davies 1998: 32). In my own case, the relatedness has come, not from the subject matter, but rather from a set of research strategies and philosophical and theoretical inclinations, which inform each other; method and theory are intertwined and cannot be understood as separate entities. Further, my academic background has trained me to think across disciplinary boundaries, and make theoretical connections between different intellectual debates. This led me to feel a closer affinity with certain genres of criminology than others.

This PhD can be understood loosely as emerging out of the growing self-defined bodies of interpretive work known as existentialist criminology, cultural criminology and constitutive criminology. Existentialist criminology is a relatively new field, with at present only two large edited volumes; *Existentialist Criminology* (Crewe & Lippens 2009) and *Crime Governance and Existential Predicaments* (Hardie-Bick & Lippens 2011). Both of these readers consist of short chapters written by different theorists and are heavily influenced by the philosophical work of Heidegger, Nietzsche and Sartre. Cultural criminology draws upon a range of

theoretical trajectories developed both within and outside the discipline. These range from the interactionist tradition to existential philosophy; therefore there is to some extent, some theoretical overlap with existential criminology; indeed it could be said that existentialist criminology is merely a sub-genre of cultural criminology. Constitutive criminology, developed by Stuart Henry and Dragan Milovanovic (1996), favours an affirmative postmodernist approach to the study of crime and deviance. Influenced by the likes of Lacan, Deleuze, Laclau and Derrida, this brand of realist postmodern thinking is more humanist in nature, as opposed to nihilistic and defeatist, and examines how human subjects constituted within the social order can be harmed and destroyed by what they ultimately co-produce. These three branches of criminology, however, are not so remote from each other, as even the most cursory glance at the literature informing each of them will demonstrate, and **all** label themselves as postmodernist in flavour.

Cultural criminology has been packaged as an exciting sub-genre that stands as an “...emerging movement within and against criminology.” (Ferrell et al 2004: 1). Its proponents state that it is; “an outbreak of resistance...suggestive, injunctive...absurd...a series of enticing vistas...” (Ibid: 1). Hayward calls for an understanding of crime that rests upon the “...desperate attempt to escape the humdrum realities and banalities of ‘regular’ life” (2004: 9). The methodology of the cultural criminology approach is still developing although certainly, it favours qualitative approaches such as ethnography to quantitative methods. However, it can be asserted that generally speaking, cultural criminology is an attempt to formulate a postmodern theory of crime which lies in the *phenomenology* of criminality. This particular brand of phenomenology utilised by criminologists has been

criticised as overly simplistic, and Downes and Rock (1982: 165-6) have pointed out that criminology's version of phenomenology:

is confined to a few arguments which are at the centre of the imported version accepted by criminology. The imported version is an incomplete reflection of the wider span of phenomenology but its framework is orthodox enough. It is designed to explore the practical knowledge which people have of their social world, knowledge which is afforded a paramount significance.

During the time that has elapsed since their criticisms, there has been a flurry of criminological research grounded in a more theoretically rigorous phenomenology. One of the key proponents of this type of research has been Jack Katz, who has developed a unique research strategy of his own (see Katz 2002; Katz and Csordas 2003). Similarly, Jonathan Wender is also notable in his appropriation of Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology, as he endeavours to create a "phenomenological aesthetics of encounter" (2004: 49) and Chris Allen's (2007) *Crime, Drugs and Social Theory: A Phenomenological Approach* draws from Heidegger, Bordieu and Merleau-Ponty. Since then, the edited volumes *Existentialist Criminology* and *Crime, Governance and Existential Predicaments* explicitly develop the possible applications of existential phenomenology to criminology, yet to date analyses of actual data from the perspective of existentialism are relatively small. These works, amongst others, will be critically overviewed later in the thesis. In many respects then, it could be said that the approach that many cultural criminologists adopt – phenomenological ethnography - is more of a research strategy than a research method.

### **Ethnography: an overview**



Whilst there is no universally accepted definition of ethnography, the word 'ethnography' translates as 'the description of cultures' or 'writing about folk'. The word culture is ambiguous in itself and "...has not been so much an object of study as the ground upon which other issues can be addressed." (Thomas 1999: 263.) This description of 'culture' is usually constructed through the interpretation of data collected through non-participant and participant observation, interviews, film and documentary analysis, although participant observation is often seen as the primary form of research employed by ethnographers. This ordinarily involves one researcher spending time living amongst the people being studied in order to develop as thorough understanding as possible of the daily lives of the group; hence ethnography has been defined as the "art and science of describing a group or culture" (Fetterman 1989: 11). Pink (2009: 22) has succinctly described ethnography as:

a process of creating and representing knowledge (about society, culture and individuals) that is based on ethnographers' own experiences. It does not claim to produce an objective or truthful account of reality, but should aim to offer versions of ethnographers' experiences of reality that are as loyal as possible to the context, negotiations and intersubjectivities through which the knowledge was produced.

At the outset of my doctoral research, I decided that it was important to live within or close to the community I was going to be researching. At the time, I was travelling some 30 miles to the area in order to squeeze in a few hours of fieldwork, and it felt as if I was doomed to remain on the margins as an outsider, which in turn seemed to go against the immersion ethos dictated by the established rules for doing ethnography; the assumption being that deeper and 'better' understandings come from longer durations of fieldwork. In January 2009, I was finally able to move into the area, and my perspective changed immediately.

It is said that ethnography is an active pursuit, and the ethnographer often has to work hard in order to extract information. Ethnography has its origins in anthropology, and the social anthropologist Malinowski famously described the process; "...the ethnographer has not only to spread his nets in the right place, and wait for what will fall into them. He must be an active huntsman, and drive his quarry into them and follow it up to its most accessible lairs." (2007: 48). These days, however, ethnographers are reluctant to admit to such a predatory approach, but the observation is useful if understood in an allegorical sense; ethnography is both a matter of luck and an unrelenting quest for information or 'knowledge' at its most detailed and deepest level. Until I moved into the area, the practice of ethnography had seemed like hard work, and I was beginning to think that I would have to depend solely upon organised interviews and focus groups for information. However, the matter of 'luck' came into play shortly after I had moved to the area; all of a sudden people I was meeting in day-to-day life were more than happy to tell me about the problems relating to crime and anti-social behaviour within the community. It was as if the field had opened up just by my presence there, and I began to think more about the random, uncertain and chance nature of research itself, never mind the applications of chaos theory and quantum mechanics to criminological understandings discussed by Henry and Milovanovic (1996).

Ethnographic research is traditionally carried out in three phases; the fieldwork or data-collection, the analysis, reading, interpretation and dissemination of the data, and finally the publication and usage of the research. I would include under the concept of interpretation,

the important process of reflexivity in its broadest sense – epistemological, ontological and also personal. Similarly, as part of the reflexive process, interpretation is ongoing – and therefore the classic linear three phase research strategy is rarely possible in reality. Ferrell et al (2008: 178) have alluded to the spontaneous and anarchic nature of criminological ethnography:

At its extreme, ethnography suggests a process through which researchers learn to lose themselves inside a series of illicit situations – and by losing themselves, find the meanings and emotions that those situations carry. In this way ethnographic method comes to stand against ‘methodology’ itself, to the extent that methodology is conventionally conceptualized as a set of preordained procedures to be deployed as determinants of the research process. Good ethnography in contrast generally comes closer to following Feyerabend’s injunction that ‘anything goes’, emerging as an alternative way of living for those willing to explore the uncertain nuances of transgression and control. The morality of ethnography is that of human engagement and situational decision, its politics more the do-it-yourself dynamics of anarchism than the governance of guidebooks and bureaucratic regulation.

This claim that ‘anything goes’ might offend those who favour a more structured, organised and rigorous ethnographic method, and yet from a more positive and optimistic perspective it does open the way for researchers to be more creative in their approaches. Certainly, it is true that ethnographers need to be social chameleons, adapting to situations as they shift, and mediation between groups needs to be delicately managed (Eder & Fingerson 2003: 35-7). This was especially true in my research where groups with different agendas, experiences and perceptions were interviewed and observed; these groups ranged from young people to professionals working for the local authorities. Doing ethnography is a learning process for the researcher in itself and this process will be explored further on in the thesis. It is widely recognised that a sense of rapport must be established between the

researcher and the participants of the study. According to Coffey, this must necessarily include the “...impression management of the ethnographer’s body...” (1999: 65). It is inevitable that however much one is intellectually aware of this issue, it is not always possible to plan one’s “impression management” carefully, and I found out the hard way just how crucial this aspect of fieldwork is. Rushing from work one day to do voluntary work with young offenders, I did not have time to go home and change. I turned up wearing a blue shirt and dark blue skirt and jacket. That evening, I noticed a change in the participants’ attitude towards me, and failed to comprehend this alteration in behaviour from their usual openness. The realisation as to why came to me at the end of the session when one of them approached me to tell me that I “look like a copper wearing that!” My formal attire had distanced me from them. This incident informed future research in which ongoing and embodied **self-awareness** and adaptability has almost become a research strategy in itself. Reflecting upon this, the arguments made by Ferrell and Hamm (1998) make sense; doing ethnography is indeed full of surprises, and even the best made plans can be turned on their heads.

Traditionally, one of the best ways around the unpredictable nature of ethnographic *praxis*, is to aim at triangulating several sub-methods or strategies. With regard to standard or textbook approaches to methodology, Denzin states that “...triangulation involves a complex process of playing each method off against the other so as to maximise the validity of field efforts.” (1978: 304). However, it **was** not my intention to attempt to integrate them in a search for a valid consensus of results, but rather, to embrace the findings for what they are, which will include an assessment of any juxtapositions and contradictions, alongside

complementary research outcomes. In this manner, it becomes possible to uncover multiple versions of reality. Although the research strategies used in this study have a common goal – to understand experiences and perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour in the locality and community of Bryn Mawr - it is also through looking at the differences between the findings of different research strategies that research questions might be answered; “...the rupture of that ‘natural attachment’ puts in question the idea of naturalness rather than that of attachment.” (Derrida 1977: 46) The particular ethnographic sub-strategies that I have employed are outlined below.

### **Non-participant and participant observation**

The archetypal forms of research undertaken by ethnographers are types of observation, and more particularly, participant observation. Whyte (1984) observed that participant observation offers opportunities and insights that cannot be produced by any other methods. May (1997: 138) was of the opinion that participant observation is potentially the most demanding and analytically challenging method of research. The observations made are ordinarily noted in a fieldwork diary, together with any interpretive comments. The demanding nature of participant observation and the potential analytical problems arising from a hard day’s fieldwork can be seen in the following excerpt from my personal field notes:

The Y.O.T. mini-bus swayed, occasionally jolting as it hit a rough spot in the road and it jarred my back and hurt my joints. The sun had set and the sky was golden and aquamarine, smeared with charcoal. It was magical

and I wanted to paint it. The silhouettes of winter trees stood braced against the coastal winds. I thought that they looked like a row of elderly people, hunched over, canes in hand, waiting in the post office on pension day. Liam was prattling on about how many times he had got stoned, how cool the Rastamen were in his home town, and how many cans of lager he had consumed that weekend. It all sounded horribly mundane, although something told me I should have been shocked. Sometimes it felt like I had heard and seen it all now. I began to drift off as it felt that every other word was 'ganj' or 'man'. I thought back to when getting stoned was supposed to lead to enlightening experiences, forcing the user to see the world in a different way. Liam just made it sound so dull and the Age of Aquarius seemed like a distant dream. I was woken out of my daydream by a jolt as sudden as the minibus' encounters with ruts in the road. Josh was ranting at Liam. "Shut up stupid! Do you think it is cool to take drugs and get pissed? You're 11!" Clearly someone else had heard enough too. I had been hoping for a young boy's encounters with marijuana; instead I got a diatribe about how many spliffs he had smoked; the experience of it for him was secondary. It amused me a little because it seemed obvious that Liam was trying to impress Mike, who was 6 years older than him. Instead he just looked foolish. However, it showed me that the older lads who had been through the YOT system were now involved in keeping the younger ones in their place. This told me that the context of the talk is crucial. Had I been in a room with a recorder running, I would have been more focused, maybe asked questions. Fieldwork is so exhausting sometimes, the discomfort of the moving minibus didn't help, and the landscape was a distraction from the talk. There is little point trying to do it when you're ill and have been at work all day. What did I learn today? Not much....

Non-participant observation has not been so widely problematised by ethnographers, and I would argue that it is not possible to observe and not participate in some way. Following the contemporary philosopher Jacques Ranciere, I suggest that those ideas which insist on participation as necessary are based on a false distinction between passivity as spectatorship and activity as participation. In *The Emancipated Spectator*, Ranciere argues that observing or spectating has never been passive in the first place, hence there is no requirement for social action as performance to emancipate or activate the audience. Likewise, it is not necessary to use participation as a way of giving the performance a life of

its own, because it already has one, irrespective of our presence or absence. Antonin Artaud, a French poet, theatre theorist and actor refused to see a division between actors and audience. In his *Theatre of Cruelty*, the audience and actors were spatially undifferentiated. Artaud did not see the point in conveying political ideas to distance spectators as his forerunners had, for example Brecht. Hence, Artaud argued against the tradition of 'making stage and auditorium into two closed worlds' (Artaud 1977: 66), and believed that proximity might encourage audiences to think more. His *Theatre of Cruelty* would awaken the emotions of the audience in a way that allowed it to speak not only to 'the body', but also to the 'mind in the flesh' (Artaud, quoted in Sontag 1976: 111). However exciting and emotionally powerful spectatorship could be, sometimes during periods of non-participant observation, I felt driven to participate in a more embodied manner either through boredom or because I was waiting for something meaningful to my research to occur. The French philosopher Henri Bergson, considered the experience of *attente* by discussing the example of someone waiting for sugar to dissolve in a glass of hot water. He stated that the impatience we feel in waiting is in fact a lived experience of the difference between our time and the time of the sugar (Bergson 1911: 10). Bergson suggests that everything has its own rhythms or different modes of being in time, and that waiting is a participation in these rhythms, but also when we feel exhausted by trying to keep up with another thing that changes too quickly for us. Often, these 'pauses' between frames of action provide time-spaces for the ethnographer as spectator to have moments of theoretical insight into social attitudes, behaviours and norms, and that taking part in something can mean simply paying attention.

Participant observation has been undermined by the recognition that it implies two antithetical strategies (see, for example Hastrup 1995: 127-8). Gold (1958) had to some degree, got around this issue by dividing participant observation into four possible approaches; complete observer (or non-participant observer), complete participant, observer-as-participant, or participant-as-observer. However, these approaches need not be static and may alter during the course of the fieldwork; "In the dialectic between the poles of observation and participation, participation changes the anthropologist and leads him to new observation, whereupon new observation changes how he participates. But this dialectical spiral is governed in its motion by the starting point, which is observation." (Rabinow 1977: 79-80).

Participation is not really participation if events and outcomes are already determined beforehand; in this instance it would leave the experience with a sense of inevitability and falsity. This is often seen in the repetitive reports produced for agencies, which read with a sense that the researcher has pursued the data collection with a clear idea of what they will find in order to produce an analysis for policy makers. As actors in our own right, researchers carrying out ethnography 'at home' are working within a wider social group in which norms, rules and laws regarding behaviour are already known to us to a degree. Similarly, we ordinarily operate within the rules of our disciplinary genre; in this case social science, and carry with us all the 'knowledges' we have gained through years of reading, and often through previous research. Hence to some extent, it might be argued that our participation is wasted time as the results might already be 'fixed', as in the case of betting on a 'rigged' horse race, or applying for a job already filled. Instead, as a form of 'play', participation within a social world should be experienced as creative and unpredictable. It is



at its best when it attempts to see the invisible, feel the untouched and generate new ideas which could never have been imagined. The desire is for all participants to allow themselves to be caught up in events that really do have a life of their own, beyond the possibilities that any blueprinted agenda might envision. This is not to say that participation should be chaotic, or entered into carelessly. On the contrary, faced with pure chaos or an infinite number of possibilities, we often seem to become paralysed, or to lapse into clichéd ways of thinking and acting. Whilst maintaining openness to possibility, we need to at the same time, be mindful of certain rules or instructions such as ethical guidelines, which in turn must always leave room for multiple responses and outcomes.

The word observation itself means watching, seeing, or looking closely, and ethnographers have been criticised both for being voyeuristic and entrenched in the inherently visual Western imagination (see Fabian 1983; Clifford and Marcus 1986). Similarly, feminism has considered the prevalence of vision in knowledge production as primarily a masculinist concern, which has metaphorical affinities with light, truth, objectivity, certainty and transcendence in the history of Western philosophy; “In Greek thought visibility represents the ultimate certainty of a reality that must be confirmed visually. Seeing light is a metaphor for seeing the invisible in the visible, or seeing things in an intelligible form that holds all that exists together but is itself devoid of sensible qualities.” (Vasselau 1998: 3)

The irony of the ethnographer’s reliance on observation became explicitly apparent to me during my own fieldwork. Several months after entering the field in 2010, I became ill and had to remove myself from my doctoral research for approximately one year. During this

time, I developed an associated eye condition which resulted in me partially losing my sight. Although I was aware of this to some extent, it was a gradual process, which took place over the year. When I re-entered the field, my vision in one eye consisted of looking through a thick grey veil with vague shapes moving behind it, whilst the sight in the other eye was only acceptable whilst wearing glasses. During this second phase of fieldwork, my other senses became foregrounded, and I noticed the senses of smell and hearing in particular became more acute. I also realised that I was able to imagine, in images 'inside' my mind so to speak, what people were telling me as events or happenings. This lack of ability to depend primarily on vision for information therefore improved my imaginative and listening skills.

Ethnographers extract much of their information from listening skills, which, as Ingold (2000) points out, along with vision, mutually inform each other. The multi-sensory nature of ethnography is perhaps best articulated by Hammersley and Atkinson who have argued that; "...participant observation is not a particular research technique but a mode of being-in-the-world characteristic of researchers" (1994: 249). Being-in-the-world here acknowledges the entire sensory presence of the ethnographer as key to the process, rather than merely as an observer, who just happens to be there. The acknowledgement of the multi-sensory experience of the researcher in turn informs the research itself, as awareness of participants' audio, visual, olfactory and somatic sensorial experience of their realities becomes heightened. Pink (2009: 63) suggests that:

The notion of ethnography as a participatory practice is framed within ideas of learning as embodied, emplaced, sensorial and empathetic, rather than occurring simply through a mix of participation and observation...participation might be understood as producing multi-sensorial and emplaced ways of knowing whereby visual observation is not necessarily privileged.

Detailed discussions on the nature of reflexive embodiment and a phenomenology of the flesh will follow later on in the thesis, and really this particular aspect of ethnographic method needs to be almost re-thought as multi-sensorial participation.

Naively, the traditions of participant observation developed in anthropology (by the British school of social anthropology and American school of cultural anthropology) and in sociology (by Robert Park and his associates at the Chicago School in the 1920s and 1930s), both assumed that the information or *a priori* 'knowledge' gleaned from ethnographic research consisted of hard **social facts**. A major issue in these early works was to limit the distortion of empirical data by the presence of the researcher, and indeed many ethnographies did and still do, claim to be objective. In this genre of positivist ethnography, the ethnographer was made invisible in the text – their experience of a shared reality with their subjects was obfuscated in the objective pretence of the monograph. This left much ethnography exposed to the critique of postmodernist theory, feminism and hermeneutics. Geertz famously questioned both the internal and external validity of ethnography; "Should the literary character of anthropology be better understood, some professional myths about how it manages to persuade would be impossible to maintain" (1988: 3). Similarly, Hastrup noted; "Today, the questioning of the anthropologist's authorial status marks the end of modernism...physical presence in the field is no longer the source of absolute authority" (1995: 19). Brewer has taken this argument one step further by describing ethnographies as "partial, selective, even autobiographical in that they are tied to the particular ethnographer and the contingencies under which the data were collected" (2000: 24-5).

Cultural criminologists acknowledge the subjective nature of ethnographic research, and Ferrell (1997) coined the term *criminological verstehen*, after Max Weber. For Weber, *verstehen* meant the subjective understanding of people's behaviour through empathy and sympathetic participation, with a focus on the emotional context in which action takes place. Yet sometimes, participation can get in the way of empathising with and understanding human behaviours and an ethnographer can change a situation by their very presence. To draw a theatrical allegory, when one is also an actor on the stage, one might not be able to understand the performance as holistically as a member of the audience. For this reason, I decided to use both multi-sensorial participation and non-participant observation as research strategies for studying experiences and perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour in Bryn Mawr. This was to take place in a variety of contexts including the local public house, the community park and other public spaces and also within the confines of activity groups run by the Youth Offending Team. These groups primarily consisted of members residing in Bryn Mawr.

### **Semi-structured and open ended interviewing**

In ethnographic research, issues of representation are always problematic; how best to represent the Other? This is unfortunately often more problematic when the Other is a part of one's own society and one is conducting ethnographic research at home; "The Other is

here, is literate, and has a voice – no wonder the theory of representation is in crisis.”  
(Czarniawska 2004: 107).

As previously mentioned, it is vital that the research aims need to be accounted for when choosing research methods. As the key aim of this research was to understand perceptions and experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour in the community of Bryn Mawr, one of the predominant methods had to be interviewing, which can give the participant in the study a voice to a degree. Interviewing is one of the most widely utilised methods of exploring social worlds, and it is normal practice to record the interview, and then transcribe it. Recording the interview allows for more fluidity, speed and accuracy in the data gathering process. Additionally, when one has lost their dependency on vision for reading interview transcripts, listening to taped interviews is a key aspect of the process of analysing data. The formats of interviews vary considerably from researcher to researcher, although ethnographers generally favour the semi-structured on unstructured interview method. The semi-structured interview involves some sort of schedule and is bracketed off outside normal social interaction. The unstructured interview can be seen as spontaneous, often occurring during participant observation. These types of interview often draw out information that the interviewer might have otherwise overlooked, and also potentially allow the participants a greater input into the research. During episodes of participant observation, particularly with young people during the Youth Offending Team’s preventative activity programme, these spontaneous short interviews would happen almost naturally. Sometimes, young people would begin a conversation between themselves, and at an appropriate point, I would interject to ask a question, or for clarification on an issue they

had raised. This ordinarily occurred during periods of travel between venues, workshops in the woodland, at the play schemes, or eco-events. These preventative programmes were far less structured than the drama classes and the courses run by the fire service, and conversation was more fluid and natural.

I observed that one of the benefits of spontaneous, more natural interviewing was that people were more likely to be 'caught off guard' and open up, freely giving information that they would not perhaps feel so comfortable with providing whilst the tape was running, allowing "the conversation to wander, and therefore unexpected themes emerged revealing issues I could not have anticipated" (Agar 1980: 13). This was something I came to see as particularly pertinent due to the nature of the research. Many of the people I wanted to speak with had been involved or were involved in some sort of criminal activity or anti-social behaviour, and if they were not involved directly themselves, they were likely to know somebody who was. Direct questioning during a formal interview often yielded less information than spontaneous 'chats'. This is an issue other ethnographers of transgressive or marginalised communities have experienced. For instance, Judith Okely (1983: 45) had a similar experience whilst conducting research among the traveller gypsies, who associated questioning with persecution and prosecution:

I found the act of questioning elicited either an evasive and incorrect answer or a glazed look. It was more informative to merge into the surroundings than alter them as inquisitor...Towards the end of my fieldwork I pushed myself to ask questions, but invariably the response was unproductive, except among a few close associates. Even then, answers dried up, once it appeared that my questions no longer arose from spontaneous puzzlement and I was making other forms of discussion possible.

On the other hand, some participants were more than willing to talk, and were desperate to have an audience, often departing from the questions and going off on one tangent after another. Others had heard what topics and issues I was interested in and even sought me out to inform me of their opinion, or went straight to the point in interviews. Unsolicited accounts of crime and anti-social behaviours which I was able to acquire also provided fruitful 'knowledges' about people in the community which I could then follow up in my next formal interview. For instance, I heard mention of particular problematic individuals mentioned in casual conversation, and was then able to gather a picture of them and their activities by comparing information revealed about them from multiple sources. Similarly, young people were more prepared to discuss matters relating to underage alcohol consumption and recreational drug use whilst sitting on the Youth Offending Team minibus with me than they were in a one-to-one interview. However, these types of informal interviews containing everyday rhetoric were also more difficult to transcribe and the information gleaned was written in field notes; therefore this type of information is presented as such in the thesis. These notes obviously form accounts which are more researcher-subjective, as it was not possible to write down comments verbatim from memory when a day's fieldwork was over. Additionally, some notes I made on casual conversations amongst people relate to individuals who did not provide informed consent to be formally interviewed. These individuals were present in the field, but were not active participants in the research. These spontaneous types of interviewing or questioning that took place are therefore distinct from the interviews defined clearly as such within the context of fieldwork, for which informed consent was gained.

Various problems can occur when interviewing participants with chaotic or disorganised lives, and often interviews were re-arranged several times before they actually happened. The interview can often be hard work for the researcher when the participant is reticent, or it can be understood as an effective means of enunciation for a keen interviewee. Both extremes of this spectrum were experienced during the fieldwork. Interview narratives can demonstrate a high order of intertextuality, of dialogue between texts and events: anecdotes, autobiography, biographies, spaces and places, poetry, quotations, humour, lies, collective memories, and rumours. Indeed, it must fluctuate between the proximity of the familiar and the remoteness of the strange, if the interpreter and readers' attentions are to be held. In the space of an interview, the interviewee is inevitably going to be at the centre of events. The researcher is foregrounded and the interpretation of the material is itself essentially a performative practice. During the interview, it is in the residue of the voice (Barthes 1977: 179) where the account comes to life, in addition to all of those techniques of the performer's embodied arts of gestures, shrugs, glances, enactments of events, and impersonations of people being discussed. For as Benjamin said; 'Storytelling, in its sensory aspect, is by no means a job for the voice alone' (1992: 107). Interview transcripts as typed words do not reveal the nuances of meaning as the original audio files do, so it is crucial to make notes alongside the speech-text regarding gesture, which can ultimately change the meaning of the associated words. Interviews are catalysts for personal reflection and also the desire on the part of the researcher to reveal her own experiences through her interpretations. Talking activates memory; these spaces function not only as mnemonic places in the sense that they evoke old memories, but also create new ones. Similarly, in



listening to interview tapes over and over again, becoming familiar with the words, the pauses, the laughter and the tones of voice allows for the participants' experiences to merge with the ethnographer's, yet each time, something new also erupts from the text.

Silverman (2001) has defined three approaches to interviewing; positivism, emotionalism and constructionism. Positivist approaches afford the interviewer more control over the data construction, and have thus been criticised for being biased and leading. My approach fell somewhere between emotionalism and constructionism. Whilst I was interested in how the interviewees experience and perceive crime and anti-social behaviour, I was also interested in how these accounts co-produce social meaning; "Emotionalists help us to see that interviewee respondents are active sense-making subjects...By contrast, constructionists are interested in documenting the way in which accounts 'are part of the world they describe'." (Silverman 2001: 95). These two approaches need not be conflicting and relate to two of the main themes emergent from the research which are outlined in the thesis; firstly, the *lived* experience and social construction of space and place, and secondly how deviance can be viewed through the lens of the body as socially and politically constructed and simultaneously through the inscribed and embodied *lived* experience of the individual. As such, it is possible to obtain authentic accounts of subjective experience, and also to look at what these tell us about the wider community. The importance of adopting both of these approaches became clear whilst talking with a young interviewee about an incident involving three other young people in her neighbourhood. In the context of a discussion about the spreading of rumours causing fights amongst young people in the neighbourhood, Katie, aged twelve, informed me that Sian and Bethan had both

simultaneously performed oral sex on Daniel. The two girls were twelve and sixteen years old, and Daniel was twelve. Katie stated that "It's true because Daniel told me himself...well, I heard it as a rumour but then he told me himself that it's true." Katie's body language and facial expressions whilst conveying this information displayed conflicting feelings of revulsion and curiosity. She had previously revealed what she thought of the two girls in a previous conversation unrelated to the interview; that they were 'sluts', and her interactions with them had not been positive. I thought about this reported incident a lot that night, and about the ideas I had about these two girls based on hearsay and observations in the group. I knew all three young people, as they had all attended the Youth Offending Team preventative activities programme at some time or another. It was not appropriate to talk to the young people involved about what effectively amounted to two underage people engaging in sexual acts with somebody over sixteen. I realised quickly, that if it had been a sixteen year old boy and a younger boy doing it to a twelve year old girl, I would have found it more shocking, and this realisation in itself elicited a deep emotional response. At that point, I decided to refer the information to the Youth Offending Team. Apparently, the situation had not happened as Katie reported it, and it had been dealt with and a lot of work had been done with the young people involved. Later, another youth worker informed that the older girl had been given a contraceptive implant at her mother's request due to her sexual behaviour. Later still, a small group of other young people showed me an alleyway whilst we were walking around the neighbourhood, giggling that it was where Daniel had got his "blow job." What persisted for me was the manner in which the girls were constructed amongst other females in the neighbourhood as 'sluts' and the lack of attention to how social power was negotiated in this situation. What could be gleaned

from thinking through the girls in the neighbourhood's nascent understandings about what power is, how their femininities are constructed in relation to power, and how are their femininities lived, created and performed through these types of experiences either actively or vicariously through other girls? Further, who was the victim and who was the perpetrator in this context? How do we differentiate between the realities of patriarchy and what is perceived and experienced as a power?

Although the original conversation took place within a formal interview situation, it is useful to note how the information (and subsequently, the possible interpretations) altered after the comments of the youth workers and following that, the group of young people, were taken into account. Despite the information ultimately standing up as probable, I had already learnt first-hand one of the main theoretical problems associated with interviewing – that of the possibility of receiving incomplete and/or incorrect information and accounts, which will impact upon interpretations of events. Whilst in some areas of research this problem can be addressed by comparing and contrasting what different interviewees have to say about the same topic, I felt that due to the nature of my research aims and approaches and ethical issues of confidentiality, this would not always be appropriate. It was at this point, in terms of gaining generic information about crime and anti-social behaviour, I decided that focus groups, or group interviewing would be another useful research strategy.

### **Focus groups**

Following Loader *et al.*'s (1998) study *Narratives of decline: youth, dis/order and community in an English "Middletown"*, I decided to organise these groups according to age; quite simply between a group of young people between the ages of ten to seventeen, and a group of residents who were also parents, and who were between the ages of approximately 35 and 50. Loader *et al.* found that by organising their groups according to age-related social categories, they were better able to see the interrelations between individual biographies, experiences and fear of crime, and their connections and affiliations to locality and community. As a major part of my study looks at how people perceive Bryn Mawr both spatially and as a community, their methodology was attractive to say the least, and it was one that I would have liked to develop further. However, the decision to try to get focus groups together was also partly down to the socio-demographic groups of contacts I had already made in the field, and the fact that it is often the case in a mixed group consisting of different age categories, younger people might not feel so free to speak. Also, the context of a group interview, particularly with young people who offend, removes the anxiety often felt due to associating the interview with the questioning methods used by the police, social workers and school teachers. Additionally, I had been an observer at several local Policing and Community Team meetings and had noticed the chaos that would ensue, with the same people attending and dominating the discussions. Although the focus groups were intended to be open ended discussions around a particular theme, by controlling to a degree who was in each group, I was afforded with a certain amount of control over productive participation. In the end, I was able to organise two focus groups; one took place in the local community public house, and the other took place within a Youth Offending Team preventative

activities programme drama session. They both had very different atmospheres and outcomes. Both groups were questioned regarding how they felt about their community, what it was like to live there, what types of crime and anti-social behaviours they knew about, who they felt was responsible for it and what might be done to improve the lives of people who live in the community by local agencies. The responses proved interesting in temporal terms. Whilst the younger people focused the discussion on how they perceived their community and neighbourhood in the present, the older people predominantly talked about the past and the possible futures for the area. The outcomes of the focus groups will be discussed at length later in the context of the analysis.

### **Margaret Kusenbach's concept of the 'go-along'.**

Initially, I had intended to carry out a research method which I had named *shadowing*, which basically involved spending some time with Youth Offending Team workers who were working in the locality of Bryn Mawr. This was in order to build rapport with the young people who I was later hoping to interview and to observe firsthand the types of intervention procedures utilised in the area. Then I became aware of Kusenbach's (2003) work on street phenomenology, which utilised the idea of the *go-along* as a research tool.

Alongside interviewing and observation, Kusenbach adopted the go-along, a sort of mobile interview, as a means of finding out about her subjects lived experience of space and place. Some of the go-alongs she conducted for her research lasted only a few minutes, and others nearly a day. In her unique study, Kusenbach describes how go-alongs; "...unveil the complex layering and filtering of perception...offer insights into the texture of spatial practices...provide unique access to personal biographies...illuminate the social architecture of natural settings such as neighbourhoods [and]...facilitate explorations of social realms..." (2003: 466).

As my research themes focused upon lived experiences and perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour in relation to identities, locality and community, the go-along was a seductive concept. Whereas before, I had limited my concept of shadowing to following Youth Offending Team workers on their rounds, I now realised that it need not end there, and I began to talk to some of my informants about the possibility of walking around the locality and discussing what meanings certain parts of the locality had for them.

This research tool offered not only greater potential for the triangulation of the other chosen research strategies, but also for the phenomenological endeavour that directs this thesis, as it provides the opportunity for both observing and talking about events at the moment that they occur. The go-alongs I conducted were extremely useful to understanding the temporal-spatial aspects of the neighbourhood, and also for experiencing chance encounters with other residents, via the person accompanying me. Young people were able

to show me where particular events occurred, and which places held memory and meaning for them as locations of particular social encounters or events. I began to internally map a heterogeneous network of happenings and differentiated accounts of events to develop understandings from plural perspectives.

After having conducted several go-alongs, I acquired a deeper confidence to go out and walk around the neighbourhood alone, and with my own children. I thus came to see myself, somewhat whimsically, as a sort of post-modern flâneuse. There are many ways in which walking the streets as a phenomenological ethnographer reflects the practice of flânerie in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The word flâneur in French simply translates as stroller, although it also means to look at and read the street. However, Rebecca Solnit has pointed out two other potential origins for the word: Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson has claimed that it comes from a Scandinavian word, whilst Elisabeth Wilson states that it may be derived from an Irish word for 'libertine' (2001: 198). Nonetheless, the idea of the flâneur was set in motion by Rousseau and Goethe, to be further developed by Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin. According to Baudelaire's (1964: 9) description of the flâneur:

The crowd is his element, as the air is that of birds and water of fishes. His passion and his profession are to become one flesh with the crowd. For the perfect flâneur, for the passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite. To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be

at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world - impartial natures which the tongue can but clumsily define. The spectator is a prince who everywhere rejoices in his incognito....Thus the lover of universal life enters into the crowd as though it were an immense reservoir of electrical energy. Or we might liken him to a mirror as vast as the crowd itself; or to a kaleidoscope gifted with consciousness, responding to each one of its movements and reproducing the multiplicity of life and the flickering grace of all the elements of life...any man who can yet be bored in the heart of the multitude is blockhead? a blockhead? and I despise him!

Alongside other modernists, Baudelaire vividly describes the flux, ebb and flow of the street, its inherent heterogeneity, fragmentation, passing encounters, delight in chance and endless possibilities. The experience is private, and its sensual pleasures solitary. The flâneur was a poet and artist, characterised by his distance, money, power and desire for leisure in the absence of needing to labour. As such, the flâneur was, and is, a liminal figure. His walks in Paris were often eroticised flights of fancy. There was an endless opportunity for erotic encounters – a woman seen on her own was always sexually available, even if she was not actually a prostitute. This can be seen in Baudelaire's poem *A Une Passante* (To a Passerby), which describes his fleeting encounter with a female in the street. According to Baudelaire, the flâneur moves through the labyrinthine streets and hidden spaces of the city, partaking of its attractions, pleasures and troubles, whilst remaining somehow detached and apart from it.

Benjamin made some interesting references to the practice of flânerie which are relevant to this project. Firstly, he associates the flâneur with the figure of the detective and the notion of the trace; "No matter what trace the flâneur may follow, every one of them will lead him to a crime." (Benjamin 2006: 72) Secondly, Benjamin associates the flâneur with multi-



sensorial experiences of the city, and this is most clearly expressed in his reading of Baudelaire's *A Une Passante*. Benjamin alerts us to the fact that the poem culminates in the failure of the visual; "The delight of the urban poet is love – not at first sight, but at last sight" (1999: 166). Baudelaire questions "Shall I see you again in eternity?" yet the demise of sight opened up the experience to touch in the poem; Baudelaire describes being "jostled by the crowd". The fact that "the street around me roared with a deafening sound" shows the intensity of the audio experience of *flânerie*. Here, a shift can be seen from the prevalence of the visual to the awareness of other senses as prominent. Through Benjamin's description, the *flâneur* becomes not only a figure for tactile, embodied encounters that overlay incongruent places, times and events, but also a way of acknowledging the blindness and erasures that such encounters produce. *Flânerie* therefore, can be seen as an ethnography of poetics, sensorial embodiment and investigation, with an emphasis on space, place and time.

## **Sampling**

The sampling strategies can be outlined as follows:

### **(1) Formal solicited interviews**

Interviews were carried out with 37 people, broken down as follows;

- 14 young people at risk of offending or anti-social behaviour residing in Bryn Mawr.
- 12 professionals/practitioners.
- 11 other residents and parents in Bryn Mawr.

## (2) Informal unsolicited interviews during the course of fieldwork

- Young people: aged between 11 and 17
- Practitioners
- Residents

## (3) Focus Groups

One focus group was carried out in the context of the preventative activities project for ethical reasons, and comprised of 8-12 young offenders from Bryn Mawr, depending on their attendance. Another consisted of 4 residents in Bryn Mawr and was conducted in the local public house.

## **Analysis of data**

The data analysis began before the fieldwork was completed and it guided the trajectory of the thesis. Glaser and Strauss used an inductive approach to analysing qualitative data, and the various field notes, interview data and other sources were analysed for emerging themes. The use of NVivo software was considered, but following Silverman's (2000) and Kelle's (2004) criticisms of such software, it was decided to do it the 'old fashioned' way. This was quite an embodied practice, which involved colour coding sections of text and separating them into various themes. The role of coding is to assist in the identification of

themes and to organise the data so that the support for those themes can be strengthened by providing substantive material. Through coding, one can also dismiss irrelevant data. After the key themes had been decided upon, notes were made on the interviews and colour coded markers were placed on the transcripts – often up to 15 on a page which identified key themes. As coding categories emerged, data was retrieved that was considered to be highly, moderately or slightly relevant. This data was then examined for similarities, differences and anomalies.

## **Ethical Issues**

There is now wide acceptance amongst academic communities that a thorough consideration of the legal and ethical issues involved in research is absolutely vital from the conducting of fieldwork to publication. However, there is also discontent in abundance, especially amongst criminologists that the rigorousness of ethics committees and review boards impedes the acquisition of valuable information, and that the ethnographies of deviance of the past point to an era where there was more intellectual freedom resulting from a more laissez faire attitude to ethical dilemmas. Ferrell *et al.* state that; “Putting organizational risk management ahead of methodological independence, IRBs degrade the professional status of those they regulate. Even when administered with kindness and insight, even when genuinely concerned with ‘human subjects’ – as they sometimes are – Institutional Review Boards nonetheless embody the sort of corporate routinization that has come to define criminological enquiry” (2008: 164). However, it is not my intention here to

embark upon a debate regarding the pros and cons of ethics committees, but rather to point out that, whilst many of the considerations of ethical issues are valid, many others can actually impede the research process; hence the negotiation of ethics is a controversial and complex research issue, which should be reflected upon throughout the research process. However, there are some ethical guidelines which must be followed in all cases. Here, I intend to consider ethics on four levels; firstly on the immediate impact on the individual subjects in the fieldwork process, secondly, in relation to the community, thirdly in relation to the researcher, or self and finally at the level of policy and wider social implications.

#### (1) Individual subjects

Ethical issues must be based around respect for all the participants, especially those considered vulnerable. Vulnerabilities in this particular research context include participants who are victims of crime, who are offenders and who are minors. Information sheets regarding support services will be provided where necessary. No participant must be placed at risk – legal, physical, psychological, social or otherwise, and informed consent is acquired so that the participants have complete understanding of what the research is about, and what their role is. Cresswell (2003) has suggested that debriefing sessions between researchers and participants can be useful. In this respect, it is important to use clear and straightforward language when communicating with the participants. In keeping with the theoretical and methodological approaches in this piece of ethnographic research, it is essential to respect and acknowledge the authenticity of the perspectives of those interviewed.

The protection of anonymity of people, incidents and places are crucial from the outset, and yet the researcher must also inform the participants of their legal obligation to report to the relevant authorities any information offered regarding crimes that have not been dealt with by the police, or regarding the intention to commit crimes in the future. It is also vital to take into account differential power relationships linked to social divisions which may affect the interview interaction. This can work both ways when interviewing a range of different people which involves young people and professionals. As my research involves interactions with young people, an awareness of the power relations between parents, or guardians and minors needs to be taken into consideration.

## (2) Community

One of the most important issues here is maintaining the anonymity of place. As Noaks and Wincup (2003: 41) point out; "Residents can have understandable concerns about how the image of their area is negatively affected by subsequent research attention." It has not gone unnoticed in this study, how individuals who have left the locality, even after having lived there for over 20 years, seem more willing to discuss its problems in detail than those currently residing there. Although this could be for a number of reasons including fear, it could also reflect concern over representation. In one sense, ethnographers are in the delicate business of constructing the identities of people and places; in another they are representing the identities of people and places. There is a fine line between the two practices, which raises issues of subjectivity and objectivity.

## (3) Self and ethics

Ethnographic research raises emotional issues, which are also unavoidably practical and theoretical; "...fieldwork can be quite painful...a curious mixture of humiliations and intimidations mixed with moments of insights." (Thrift 2005: 104-106). Coffey warns of the fragmentation of self during the exploration of different aspects of community life, during which the classic ethnographer's problem of becoming/convertng/going native presents a possible danger to the self. Working in a criminological capacity is also potentially dangerous, so risk must be effectively managed (Howell 2007; Sluka 2007).

Specifically within the interview context, it is necessary to be aware of power relations between the researcher and participant, and Wincup and Noaks (2004: 50-51) refer to this as 'ethical positioning'. Briefly, this involves an awareness of the status of the interviewer in relation to the interviewee. They argue that there is often pressure to move beyond the researcher role into one of a friend, colleague or collaborator, which must be resisted. Yet, there should also be recognition of the fundamental equality of the researcher and interviewee; in the interview, they meet in a particular temporal-spatial context in a superficially asymmetrical relationship – yet one seeks to learn about perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour through themselves, and the other seeks to gain knowledge of the same through others.

#### (4) Policy and wider social issues

Throughout the research process, it is essential to assess the repercussions on audiences, and the consequences of the research. Engaging in ethnography is problematic territory for the researcher in that their theoretical inclinations and method are so closely intertwined

that any ideal of neutrality in research is immediately unachievable. Yet, this is the same for all quantitative research, which merely pretends to be objective or neutral. Barthes drew attention to the enduring ambiguity inherent in texts, stating that; “A text’s unity lies not in its origin, but in its destination...” (1977: 148). As ethnographies rarely follow the three phase research process discussed earlier, this must be necessarily borne in mind during fieldwork which may be happening alongside the interpretive process. An important point to note therefore is; as ethnographic and biographical descriptions of crime and anti-social behaviour cannot realistically hope to be permanently irrelevant to policy, what are the ethical implications surrounding this?

Although Katz has been criticised for his non-materialist accounts of the causes of crime (Henry & Milovanovic 1996), he has nonetheless made explicit the distinction between potential and realized policy and political relevance, using Goffman’s research on behaviour in public places as an example. He states that whilst Goffman’s work currently remains apolitical, it *could* become relevant to policy concerns today because further research influenced by Goffman in the field of ownership and governmentality of public spaces might lead to Goffman (by proxy) having taken “...another great stride toward becoming a policy researcher.” (2004: 285).

Clearly, this is a concept that other cultural criminologists have also considered behind the facades of resistance towards policy orientated studies, and several works have demonstrated that some aspects of left criminology and cultural criminology are not

irreconcilable, but are indeed complementary (see for example Hayward 2004; Hall *et al.* 2008). Indeed, because cultural criminology explores crime in contemporary consumer society, it simply cannot ignore power relations. Yet, whilst it seeks to confront the concept of neutrality in quantitative research as merely masking the political agendas of the powerful, it maintains a dialectical engagement with those agendas; from a Foucauldian perspective, the discursive act of resistance itself is inescapably politicised.

Therefore, through engaging discursively with any aspect of criminology and through participating in the processes of fieldwork, interpretation and writing, we have to inevitably discuss power. Cunneen and Stubbs argue that; "...it is equally important for cultural criminologists to study and understand how power constructs and legitimises forms of social harm." (2004: 96) Issues of power and subjection permeate the ethnographic enterprise, which is "...not a matter of what one person does in a situation but how two sides of an encounter arrive at a delicate workable definition of their meeting" (Crick 1982: 25). Kane (2004: 317) points out that research in cultural criminology should be useful for the practitioners who work in the field, and in my research this **needed** to be handled delicately, as the practitioners themselves **were** also be research participants.

Thrift puts it quite simply; "...we need to think about the ethics of encounters – the effort to formulate right and wrong modes of behaviour – remembering that responsibility does not end with leaving the field but lasts (and sometimes well beyond) the end of the thesis..." (2005: 105; see also McCarry 2005: 101).



## Summary

In this chapter, I have outlined the methodological approaches or research strategies chosen to collect the data and answer the main research questions, and justified them in relation to some of the emergent themes and theoretical perspectives of the research, and also reflexively accounted for my own biographical influence on the decisions made. I have addressed some of the ethical issues relating to the research methods chosen by Stephanie Kane (2004: 317), who has described the contribution of methodological skills by cultural criminologists to the wider discipline of criminology as follows:

...we fill the empty categories and shade the lines of significant difference with thick descriptions of everyday life in particular locales; we analyze the circulation of paradigms of institutional power, accounting for our positions on the insider-outsider axis and other determinants of information access; we have strategies for examining the centres from the edges; we take time to establish ethical relationships of trust with the people with whom we seek dialogue; we speak in, record and transcribe discourse in languages other than our native (or otherwise familiar) tongues; we explore different ways of understanding and representing truth and authority.

It is hoped that the research methodologies outlined in this chapter will encompass the spirit of Kane's endeavour, and have made for some lively data and research outcomes.

Can she alone feel the music of the air trembling between the wings of the angels, and make or remake a body from it?

(Irigaray, 1991:176)

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Theoretical and philosophical approaches**

We have to relinquish a certain way of being moulded by our past logic in order to reach another way of Being.

(Irigaray 2008)

#### **Introduction**

Despite the post-structuralist critique of dualism, it nevertheless remains an enduring problem for social scientists. It lies seductively underneath any attempts to theoretically engage with issues such as identity, gender, human agency and social practice. This is perhaps particularly so for criminologists, whose entire discursive reality is based around the idea of what is classified as criminal behaviour and what is not. This is also expressed, for example, through criminology's binary categories of offender and victim, freedom and social control, and even its contemporary dual analysis of urban space – the “...tension between the sanitised official life of the city and the gritty realities of its underlife...” (Ferrell et al 2004: 5).

Unlike mainstream sociology, which has mainly concerned itself with abstract concepts such as actors, agents, behaviour and social practices without specifically referring to either the mind or body, criminology has found itself in a different paradoxical position and caught between a rock and a hard place; whilst it began with a form of criminal anthropology which focused upon a biologically determined body, it also has a long history of discussing what constitutes a criminal mind. Despite more recent psycho-biological studies which attempt at least, to connect the mind and body, is therefore perhaps more 'guilty' of maintaining the issue of mind/body dualism originally outlined by Descartes in 1641. This duality can also be seen in the structural oppositions such as those of male/female and light/dark. At the level of the individual, the interaction between mind and body discussed by Descartes (1968) can be allegorically linked to the wider sociological endeavour of social interactionism; the

relationships between selves and others. Confronting the dualism of mind and body therefore has profound implications for how we view not only what we understand as the self, but also what we understand as society.

This chapter aims to look at how criminology has arrived at a situation in which crime itself is described as “schizophrenic” (Hopkins-Burke 2009: 304), how criminals are perceived as leading “dual lives” (Ibid), and how the mind has been largely separated off from the body in the criminological literature. It begins by providing an outline of some of the historical approaches to the body and embodiment in criminology and other social sciences. Secondly, it describes how the body and embodiment have been addressed in symbolic interactionism and existentialist phenomenology, commenting on some of the criticisms that have arisen in relation to each theoretical approach. Finally, the chapter discusses an approach to crime and anti-social behaviour which argues that symbolic interactionism and existentialist phenomenology are not mutually exclusive and that combining the two approaches could potentially open the way for some interesting ways of understanding deviant behaviour.

### **The history of the body in criminology.**

There is no law that is not inscribed upon bodies.

Michel de Certeau (1984: 139).

The earliest connection between studies of the body and crime began within the field of criminal anthropology, originating in the Italian School of Criminology in the late C19th with Cesare Lombroso, Enrico Ferri, and Raffaele Garofalo, soon after Darwin's *Origin of the Species* was published in its original form in 1859. Lombroso, as a biological determinist, posited in his 1875 work *On Criminal Man* that criminals represent a physical type distinct from non-criminals. He stated that criminals as predestined actors, represented a form of degeneracy suggestive of earlier forms of evolution, in that they are atavistic and throwbacks to earlier forms of evolutionary life. Features indicative of criminal traits included sloping foreheads, long arms, and receding chins. Noticeably, Lombroso concluded that female criminality was restricted to prostitution and abortion, and that a man was usually responsible for instigating these crimes.

However, biological theories were not to end there. Kretschmer (1921) identified four criminal body types; asthenics, athletics, pyknics and mixed types. Hooten (1939) also conducted biological research into criminals and non-criminals, concluding that criminals are organically inferior to non-criminals. Hooten's work was appallingly racist, as he also stated that Negroid people were much likely to become delinquent than whites if their environmental and social conditions were poor. Sheldon's (1949) linked body types with criminal offending. He separated people off into endomorphs, ectomorphs and mesomorphs, concluding that most offenders were mesomorphic. Since then, Glueck and Glueck (1950), and Gibbons (1970) support the idea of the inherently criminogenic nature of the mesomorph type. The biological predestined actor model initially developed by Lombroso has more recently led to genetic studies and biochemistry as possible

explanations for criminal behaviour. Disturbingly, the biological variant of the predestined actor model of criminal behaviour together with the influence of eugenics movements led to the plausibility of so-called treatment programmes including medicating and sterilisation, and at worst genetic selection and even death.

In the light of the Holocaust, which was “scientifically” supported by these types of studies (see, for example Arendt 1964; Arnold & Hassmann 1995: 70-81), and for which perhaps ironically the persecutors were then criminalised, people today generally find these ideas **unpalatable. Nonetheless**, the criminologist Muncie (1999) has critically noted that they still have an enduring attraction for some people because they seem to use scientific evidence to define an ‘us’ from ‘them’ in an othering process which people feel justifies the targeting, outlawing and finally eradication from society of the other.

This is reflected in the fact that as late as 1994, the Centre for Social Genetic and Development Psychiatry was opened in London to determine exactly how genetic structure determines human behaviour, including criminal behaviour. Additionally, there was a conference held the following year to determine the likelihood of isolating a criminal gene (Hopkins-Burke 2009).

Although there has been a more recent trend towards combining biological theories with environmental and sociological factors, most criminologists working from a sociological

perspective find biological theories seriously problematic, even abhorrent, and prefer to study the causative nature of crime from a purely social perspective. However, there has been much criticism from within some pockets of this aspect of the discipline of an enduring positivism. Much of this critique stems from an increasing awareness of the shared ontological roots between criminology and bureaucracy, and the proliferation of administrative criminology. Presdee points out that administrative criminology takes for granted the categories of crime and disorder. (2007: 41) Jock Young recently stated that; "A fundamentalist positivism occurs within the social sciences with increasing strength and attempts at hegemony." (2004: 13) Moreover, he argues that criminals have discursively become "digital creatures of quantity, they obey probabilistic laws of deviancy – they can be represented by the statistical symbolism of lamda, chi and sigma, their behaviour can be captured in the intricacies of regression analysis and equation" (Ibid.). In short, criminals have largely been reduced to statistics, and their behaviour explained and experienced through abstract numbers and mathematical patterns. Whilst modernity produced abstract accounts of the criminal, as seen in crime surveys, the collection and analysis of statistical data, the criminal became discursively reduced to a number, and effectively became disembodied within this system. Even qualitative studies which serve administrative criminology and prop up policy fail to acknowledge the body and embodiment. Yet, the historical, philosophical and political associations between transgression and corporeality are multiple, complex and are have not been made explicit in criminological theory. This situation is at least partly due to the failure of biological theories to explain criminal behaviour, as previously mentioned. In short, criminologists working from a social perspective have been so strongly opposed to the biological determinists, or indeed any



explanations at the individual level, that any explicit discussion of the body seems to have literally become a taboo subject in sociological approaches to the study of crime.

However, as Elizabeth Grosz pointed out; “In the face of social constructionism, the body’s tangibility, its matter, its (quasi)nature may be invoked; but in opposition to essentialism, biologism and naturalism, it is the body as a cultural product that must be stressed. Far from being an inert, passive, noncultural and ahistorical term, the body may be seen as a crucial term, a site of contestation, in a series of economic, political, sexual and intellectual struggles” (1994: 19). Similarly, Lakoff and Johnson have said; “Because our ideas are framed in terms of our unconscious embodied conceptual systems, truth and knowledge depend on embodied understanding.” (1994: 555). Simply put, any knowledge of criminality and anti-social behaviour depends on an embodied understanding, which goes beyond the biological, and reflexively, this understanding must be intercorporeal. Hsu (2008) has also argued that sensorial experiences are produced, enacted and perceived in combination with each other, intertwined with emotion, meaning and memory. Bull et al. (2006: 5) state; ‘The senses mediate the relationship between self and society, mind and body, idea and object’, and new ways of looking at the body and making the sensory perceptions and experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour more explicit are now timely.

So, how are criminal bodies socially and culturally produced, perceived and imagined from both the standpoint of the criminal and society in general? Until recently, there have been many attempts to explain how criminal minds are produced, and much has been written on the subject of psychology and mental health and crime. Criminology, as an ‘umbrella’

description of a series of approaches which explain criminal or deviant behaviour, has thus largely maintained the dualistic Cartesian mind/body division, which has been heavily critiqued in other social sciences which concern themselves with all aspects of society. A few cultural criminologists have tried to understand how emotions drive criminal acts, and often tie their work in with economic and social theories relating to social exclusion, poverty and deprivation, such as in the work of Jack Katz, Jeff Ferrell, and Jonathan Wender, yet to date it is only Katz who has begun to discuss the importance of embodiment (see Katz and Csordas 2003). Nonetheless, criminology has also indirectly theorised bodies in the studies of masculinity, femininity and criminality (see, for example Messerschmidt 1993, 1997, Joe & Chesney-Lind 1995), which have recently been criticised by Hood-Williams for the attachment of the concept of masculinity to the male body; “The radical question to be asked here is whether the term ‘masculinities’ adds anything to the analysis of criminal events or is it primarily deployed as an empty tautology signifying nothing more than (some of) the things men and boys do?” (2001:39). Perhaps what remains the most exciting historical study of deviance in criminology which actively engage with embodiment is Becker’s (1963) famous work *Outsiders*. In the section “Becoming a Marihuana User”, Becker sensitively portrays the embodied *praxis* of learning to get stoned. In getting high, the user’s senses are focused upon, and time and space are distorted:

Marihuana-produced sensations are not automatically or necessarily pleasurable. The taste for such experience is a socially acquired one, not different in kind from acquired tastes for oysters or dry martinis. The user feels dizzy, thirsty; his scalp tingles; he misjudges time and distances. (Becker 1963: 53)

### **The body in other social sciences**

It is useful to look to other disciplines for inspiration as to how to deal with the body and embodiment as criminologists. Conquergood (1991) stated that ethnography is always an embodied practice, and that it can be a deeply sensuous way of knowing. As social anthropology used ethnography as its primary methodology, it was perhaps the first of the social sciences to thoroughly address the socio-cultural dimension of sensory experience. Although it appears that the social sciences are presently witnessing a 'sensorial revolution' (Howes 2006), anthropology has long been interested in the body, and there has been no hesitation amongst researchers to describe, for example, the rituals associated with bodily fluids, circumcision, disposal of the dead, tattooing and also clothing. In the 1960s and 1970s, there was a plethora of work carried out in anthropology on the body as a medium of communication, and gesture, proxemics and kinesics became popular topics of study (see Moerman and Nomura 1990 for an edited collection from this period). However, it is the work of Mary Douglas in *Purity and Danger* (1966) and *Natural Symbols* (1973) which are widely perceived as the precursors to a vast discourse on the anthropology of the body. Douglas perceived the human body as a natural symbol, which also expresses ideas about the social order; the body therefore is a medium of expression, and that "...controls exerted from the social system place limits on the use of the body as medium." (1973: 95). The beliefs that society holds about the body reflect the things that the society believes to be important – what is sacred and what is profane. Douglas asserted that there were two aspects of the body; the physical (natural or corporal) and the social (cultural or corporate). This was picked up in later studies which argued that three bodies be considered; the *individual lived body* or self, the *social body* as a symbol of society and culture and finally,

the *body politic* which is concerned with the control and regulation of bodies (Scheper-Hughes & Lock 1987).

Bordieu utilised the term *body hexis* to refer to the socially inculcated ways individuals use their bodies, which is almost a performative aspect of Bordieu's concept of *habitus*; "...charged with a host of social meanings and values." (Bordieu 1977: 87, 1990: 74). *Body hexis* is also a form of embodied memory; to put it in a criminological context, the body learns criminal techniques as it does any other, as could be seen in Becker's (1963) study. This is not to say that criminal or anti-social behaviour occurs in the context of what Sykes and Matza (1957) referred to as a technique of neutralisation, specifically the *denial of responsibility* type, but rather those certain criminal techniques and behaviours are learnt and reproduced in a holistically embodied manner; through embodied symbolic interactionism. Nick Crossley makes the futility of the mind to mind approach explicit when, critiquing Dawkins' (1976) scientific account of the transference of ideas from person to person as memes, he states; "An account of memes which ignores this 'whole body experience' is akin to a theory of natural selection which ignores sex: much less interesting and not half as convincing." (2001: 33).

Other research related to the body has been informed by the work of Michel Foucault, who, in *Discipline and Punish* for example, looked at the changes in the technologies of power in European Societies in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Foucault dramatically contrasts a graphic narrative of the brutal public execution of Damiens in 1757

with an outline of a prison timetable and the expected behaviour of inmates. He argues that within the eighty years separating these accounts, a huge shift had occurred in the ways that people were managed and controlled. Yet Foucault acknowledges that all systems of punishment are "...to be situated in a certain political economy of the body" (1977: 25). Further, he describes the power relations that have a hold upon the body and their effects upon it, arguing that the body is only a useful force if it is both productive and subjected and that these power relations that maintain subjection cannot be pinned down to state apparatus or institutions as such, but rather permeate the whole of society:

They are not localised in the relations between the state and its citizens or on the frontier between classes... they do not merely reproduce, at the levels of individuals, bodies, gestures and behaviour, the general form of the law and government; that, although there is continuity [...], there is neither analogy nor homology, but a specificity of mechanism and modality. Lastly, they are not univocal; they define innumerable points of confrontation, focuses of instability, each of which has its own risks of conflict, of struggles, and of at least temporary inversion of power relations. (1977: 25-27).

Nick Crossley defines three questions arising from Foucault's work on the body. Firstly, he states that Foucault has no position on the body, arguing that he is only interested in representations and constructions of the body, ignoring questions of their 'reality', which consequently limits his influence on work on reflexive embodiment. However, it could also be argued that Foucault *does* have a position on the body; that he understands it as the docile, or passive object of ideological forces, ignoring more questions of conscious agency than the body's 'reality'. Secondly, Foucault is critical of the concept of "a fixed human nature", suggesting that this varies historically. According to Crossley, Foucault's version of this thesis is so radical that it becomes undermining, as he appears to deny any idea of a

biologically constituted human nature. Conversely, it could be argued that for Foucault, the body is *purely* a biological object only subject to ideological forces from within and out; he rejected the idea of identity as inherent within selfhood, never mind one bound up with one's body and body image. Finally, Crossley contends that some researchers claim that Foucault conceives the body as a "...site of incoherent, competing and irrational drives and impulses" (2006: 44-45). Although Crossley states that he has not found the textual evidence to support this claim, he argues that if Foucault did subscribe to this idea, he is wrong - simply because if we did exist as a storm of conflicting emotions and drives, discipline itself would "have nothing to 'hook into'" (ibid: 45). In other words, a certain degree of organization, regularity and consistency are prerequisites for discipline and subjection to work. Also, for Crossley personally, the main issue with Foucault's empirical analysis is that it focuses upon discourses about practice as opposed to the effects of these; therefore there are considerable weaknesses in his speculations on self-policing subjects and Foucault himself agreed that reality is more chaotic than the idealizations he studied (ibid: 51).

Although Foucault's (1977) *Discipline and Punish* is the work most widely associated with describing the body/mind issue in criminology (at least theoretically), it clearly has weaknesses which could potentially be addressed. Additionally, whilst investigating and mapping socio-cultural constructions of the body is of course a crucial research venture, it might result in the under-theorization of the materiality and experiences of the lived body (Burns, 2003). To balance this, we are left with a 'desire not to drown bodies in a sea of abstraction but to focus on the here-and-now, raw reality of the body'. (Sinclair 2005: 90)

## **The body in symbolic interactionism**

In what could be satisfactorily termed as *embodied symbolic interactionism*, Erving Goffman (1959) went some way towards achieving this balance, and produced fascinating work on the performative aspects of life and human behaviour. Influenced strongly by Mead's (1967) and Cooley's (1902) work, Goffman made explicit the connection between social identity and the body as a representation of social position in *Stigma* (1963). He argued that the performative is everyday life, and vice-versa, and from this, it can be assumed that criminality can be perceived as just people going about the daily business of crime. Yet conversely, performance can also be understood as set aside from everyday life.

Denzin (2003: 129-130) has levelled a number of criticisms at Goffman's embodied dramaturgical approach to social interactions. Firstly, he argued that Goffman's work was that of a "naturalistic observer". Secondly, Denzin asserted that Goffman's work was apolitical and did not explicitly address issues of social inequality. Thirdly, he stated that Goffman's sociology was only superficially performative and that his pre-occupation with illusion and reality pre-supposed that staged versions of reality corresponded to the real world. Denzin suggested that it was time to bury dramaturgy, and that a "performative sociology does not have to be dramaturgical." (ibid: 130) Denzin's pertinent suggestions for a performative sociology include understanding it as a movement from dramaturgical staging, to an emphasis on performance as liminality and construction, following Turner, to

a view of performance “as a struggle, as an invention, as a breaking and remaking, as kinesis, as a socio-political act.” (Ibid: 135)

From this perspective, it is easy to see the symbolic connection between identity construction, performance, power and crime. The symbolic connections between performance, social dramas, inequality and crime can be read into the ideas of cultural criminology, although some of its theoretical underpinnings are weak. An example of this is the idea of Presdee’s notion of second-life criminality (2000), and Hopkins-Burke’s related “schizophrenia of crime” (2005: 304). However, it still remains very dualistic, and brings to mind the previously mentioned Mary Douglas’s work *Purity and Danger* - in other words - that one life is somehow clean, whilst the other is criminal and somehow dirty. This dualism can be interrogated by a critical application of Julia Kristeva’s (1982) concept of abjection; a phenomenological study on the powers of horror.

According to Kristeva (1982), the abject is the embodied human reaction, such as horror or vomiting, to a threatened breakdown in meaning caused by loss of distinction between subject and object or self and other. In the social sciences, the concept of abjection is sometimes used by critical theorists in discussions of perceptions of marginalized groups such as ethnic minorities, the poor and homosexuals. It is of use when considering criminal and anti-social bodies and processes of marginalisation. Recently, attention has been drawn to its **emancipatory** potential. Rose has suggested that; “Abjection is a matter of the energies, the practices, the works of division that act upon persons and collectivities such



that some ways of being, some forms of existence are cast into a zone of shame, disgrace or debasement, rendered beyond the limits of the liveable, denied the warrant of tolerability accorded purely a negative value” (1999: 253). Simply put, the dominant ideology is responsible for the demarcation of borders, outside of which exists the abject.

### **Phenomenology and the body**

Most studies from the perspective of embodiment which are heavily grounded in actual lived reality, such as Kristeva’s, are those influenced by phenomenology. Phenomenology offers another way epistemologically and ontologically, in suggesting that the outside world, body and mind are all essentially intertwined and reciprocally influencing each other. Phenomenological approaches have begun to provide a useful descriptive and analytical tool in exploring a more sensual as opposed to purely cognitive experience of crime. Phenomenology is originally derived from the Greek ‘phainomenon’, and is the study of phenomena; an investigation into essences or meanings, which is based on one’s direct experiences of things. Phenomenology has been often called the greatest philosophical achievement of the twentieth century. Initially developed by Husserl (1931), it is a philosophy that is more descriptive than explanatory (Hammond et al 1991).

Often confused with other types of qualitative research in criminology due to its emphasis on subjective first person accounts of experience and meaning, phenomenology actually has very specific and differential ontological and epistemological strands. Yet Merleau-Ponty

stated that the question of what phenomenology essentially is, had by no means been answered. (2001: vii) There exists now a plethora of studies (most usually under the umbrella of Cultural Criminology or Existential Criminology) which claim to use different perspectives falling under the rubric of phenomenology (see Lyng 2004; Wender 2004; Schinkel 2009, amongst others). In **most** cases, these are written by men and about men, often with the researchers living vicariously through their subjects. Youth crime has been the focus of much work in criminology, and cultural criminologists have examined the emotional drives behind young people who offend, referring in terms of masculinity, to “sneaky thrills”, adrenaline rushes and the euphoria of destruction, and even using sexual metaphor; as Jack Katz suggested; “The sneaky property criminal is not participating in a consensual act; the pleasure is distinctively asymmetrical. Colloquially, the thief and the vandal fuck their victims.” (1988: 72)

Also, because phenomenology has been utilised in different forms by a diversity of disciplines and subject areas, its distinct forms have become increasingly blurred. It is not appropriate perhaps to discuss all the myriad ways in which broad definitions of phenomenology have been appropriated by social scientists, but maybe more appropriate to briefly outline the main forms of phenomenology. When Husserl developed phenomenology, he was attempting to create an antidote to the objective approaches to the study of human nature and existence. This meant acknowledging the subjectivity of the experience of being human and for Husserl, subjectivity formed the foundation of all knowledge. There are several strands of phenomenology that overlap to a degree, which will be very briefly described below, before an in depth discussion of the relevance of

existentialist phenomenology for investigating embodiment in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour.

Husserlian phenomenology is usually referred to as transcendental phenomenology, which is largely descriptive in character. This branch of phenomenology seeks to transcend our unspoken and unquestioned assumptions about phenomena, in order to describe the 'essences' of phenomena as they present themselves in everyday life. Husserl thought of phenomenology as a meticulous human science that could offer not only comprehensive descriptions of phenomena but also the ways in which knowledge is constructed, and of how shared understandings are produced. Although transcendental phenomenology acknowledges the function of interpretation, it is first and foremost descriptive, and uses the skills of *epoché* and *reduction* in order to try and suspend or bracket off pre-existing *a priori* beliefs about a phenomenon before its description, thus arriving at its essence. Husserl describes this process as a return 'to the things themselves'. Through the method of 'bracketing', Husserl thought it was possible to achieve uncontaminated transcendental consciousness. In his later work, Husserl (1976) focused upon shared social reality through the concept of the *Lebenswelt* or the everyday lifeworld. In order to study this, one must observe and bracket off the assumptions which surround the essence of experiences. Later, Schutz (1972) and Garfinkel (1984) developed the idea of the lifeworld, and sociology embraced their approaches, resulting in Husserlian inspired phenomenological studies.

Hermeneutic phenomenology analyses the context, intention and meaning around a text or representation, and emphasises the interpretive. Heidegger, who has also been labelled an

existentialist, argued that all description is basically interpretive and he rejected Husserl's concept of a transcendental phenomenology. As transcendental phenomenology emphasised the descriptive, hermeneutic phenomenology highlighted the interpretive. Heidegger's departure from Husserl was signified by his assertion that Being (*Sein*) was open to bracketing or suspension (Crowell 2001). Heidegger posited that humans are 'thrown' into the world, and that humans exhibit a natural way of coping with this. Heidegger's student Gadamer (2013) also went on to examine the critical role of language as a means of 'being-in-the-world'.

Existentialism generally attempts to understand what it means to be human, and asks elemental questions; for instance whether there is such a thing as human nature, what it means to be conscious of our own mortality. Existentialism might be understood as a philosophy which suggests that another pathway is required in order to understand the human condition, governed by the norm of *authenticity*. At the heart of such a pursuit are several gestures; the flight from reason, the rebellion against academic philosophy and a negative response to organised systems of control and social order, which might be set against the individual will. (Solomon 2005: xi-xx) However, central to existentialism's themes of fear, anxiety, boredom, absurdity, death, freedom and nothingness is an inherent desire to locate a new framework for understanding humans, which, as a framework, is perhaps at odds with its sentiments towards objective science, bearing in mind that science is dependent on structures itself.

Early existentialists include Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, and later in the twentieth century Merleau-Ponty's work, connected existentialism and phenomenology (Ehrich 1999: 28). Of course, Heidegger has often been described as an existential phenomenologist, but he did not acknowledge the existentialist label. Existentialist phenomenology sees the world as connected to body and consciousness. It is the body which is the subject of all perceptions and experiences, as the minded body. If one's own body (*le corps propre*) is the perceiving subject and the position from which everything is experienced, phenomena are thus a part of one's subjectivity and are no longer understood as simply conceptual things out there in the world. We hence have existential embodied unity with the world, and can experience it at a deeply corporeal level. Merleau-Ponty's 'lived body' eventually became the concept of a phenomenology of the flesh. His central concept of the body subject aims to replace the mind/body dualism and the idea of the body as a purely physical object. The intercorporeality of Merleau-Ponty means that all embodied experiences are mediated by interactions with other peoples' embodied experiences. This reflects the idea of memes described by Dawkins (1976), but rather as embodied entities, rather than ideas transferred from mind to mind.

Central to existentialist phenomenology is the situatedness of human experience, including gendered perceptions, experiences and behaviour (see, for example, Beauvoir 1974; Irigaray 2004; Young 1980). Merleau-Ponty (1969) coined the term 'intercorporeality', which suggests that embodiment always involves interactions with other bodies (Weiss 1999: 5). It is because of this acknowledgement of the situatedness of human experience, and the focus on embodiment that existentialist phenomenology is particularly suited to the description

and interpretation of crime and anti-social behaviour. I am not saying that the usage of existentialist phenomenology in criminology is something radically new. There are emerging works, including quite recently a book entitled *Existentialist Criminology* (Crewe & Lippens 2009) which typically came out whilst I was thinking through these approaches, as is often the way with PhD research. However, having read much of the literature, if not all of it, I would argue that for all the good things I envisage about using existentialist approaches in criminology, I see as many problems. The most glaringly obvious one to anyone interested in gender is that of the particular situated nature of embodied experience. This is in the main ignored to the detriment of the feminine; most phenomenologies of crime are heavily masculinised or make a flimsy pretence at neutrality. If we are talking about the lived body, sexuate difference is a key part of that lived experience; not just from the subject's perspective but more crucially from the position of reflexive embodiment of the researcher.

Most feminists question the reality of an equal, or even existing, subject position for women. It is assumed in studies which enlist Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology that intercorporeality or intersubjectivity exist, and the question really needs to be asked where women can 'be' in these studies, and whether women have a real enough subject position to enable engagement in these processes. This somewhat monumental issue is even overlooked by contemporary phenomenologists who explicitly embrace embodiment and are working in the tradition of Merleau-Ponty, such as Dan Zahavi (2005) and Nick Crossley (2006). Consequently, this leaves plenty of room for thinking from a feminist perspective, which will be elucidated later.

## **Existentialist phenomenology and criminology**

Of particular interest to the criminologist is existentialist phenomenology's spotlight upon the 'lived body'. Through his concept of being-in-the-world (*dasein*), Heidegger (2005) reminds us that humans are entangled with, and come to pass out of existence; we are always already 'in and of' the world. Merleau-Ponty (2001) further highlights the crucial role of the body in peoples' relationships with the world, and emphasises the position of the body as the perspective from which humans perceive all things.

The first formal call for an explicitly *Existentialist Criminology* came in 2009, when Don Crewe and Ronnie Lippens suggested that existentialist analysis could potentially enrich the study of crime and deviance. They produced an edited volume which stood as the first attempt to address the fact that; "No systematic attempt has hitherto been made...to apply existential thought to problems of crime and crime control, or to put it to use in the expansion or further development of criminological theory." (2009: 5) However, the editors do also recognize the early contribution to such an endeavour of the sub-cultural theorist David Matza, (ibid: 16-18) and also acknowledge the later body of literature known as "Cultural Criminology"(ibid: 7) as partially engaging with existentialist thought. Crewe and Lippens suggest that the reason for the overall lack of interest in existentialism to date was perhaps one of bad timing; in that when it initially emerged as a philosophy on the continent, symbolic interactionism was becoming increasingly popular and driving research agendas in Britain and America. (Ibid: 6) Similarly, they state that criminology has always had a 'scientisitic' tendency, which has detracted from the study of aspects of 'being' in

relation to crime and crime control. Existentialists agree that in order to fully understand what a human being is, it is not enough to know the 'truths' that sciences such as psychology inform us of. This does not mean however, that existentialists deny the usefulness of the human sciences, but rather posit that they are inadequate for arriving at a more complete understanding of the human condition. Similarly, existentialists claim that moral philosophy - with which criminology is inextricably bound up - fails to capture aspects of human existence, and this view is made explicit in Nietzsche's discussions on morality. For him, "There are no moral phenomena at all, only moral interpretations of phenomena." (Nietzsche 1973: 96)

Drawing on the work of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Sartre, the authors of *Existentialist Criminology* attempt to pull together a collection of essays - which as they self-consciously acknowledge early on - identifies existentialism as a "dissipated term" in contrast to the claim "that Sartre and only Sartre should be considered existentialist." (Crewe & Lippens 2009: 1) Crewe and Lippens favour the plurality of existentialism over any fixed terms, arguing for the inclusiveness of the literary as a possible source on which to draw. If existentialism was as much a literary phenomenon as a philosophical one, it is also important then, to consider the literary works of Beckett, Beauvoir, Sartre and Camus; the latter two of whom actively wrote about crime, respectively in *Les Mains Sales [Crime Passionnel]* (1985) and *L'Etranger* (1988).

Certainly, existentialism is not a school of thought nor reducible to any set of tenets. The three writers who appear invariably on every list of existentialists — Jaspers, Heidegger, and Sartre — are not in agreement on essentials. By the time we consider adding Rilke, Kafka, and Camus, it becomes plain that one essential feature shared by all these men is their fervid individualism. (Kaufmann 1975: 11)



Essentially however, Crewe and Lippens settle on a definition of sorts for their purposes; “In essence, existentialism is a field of human enquiry that has at its root a philosophical position that says that neither scientific nor moral inquiry are adequate to reveal questions concerning the nature of human being. Existentialism is that form of inquiry about the nature of human being that locates the essential quality of being human in notions of freedom and authenticity.” (Crewe & Lippens 2009: 2)

In what remains of this chapter, it is not intended to offer a detailed critical review of *Existentialist Criminology*, but rather to use it as a point of departure and referral for a discussion on the philosophical, political and ethical potential of an existentialist criminology. The underlying political and religious beliefs between existentialist philosophers are diverse; for example Heidegger’s right wing German idealism contrasts sharply with Sartre’s sympathies with the political left. Kierkegaard’s Christian existentialism is clearly at odds with the content of Nietzsche’s *Twilight of the Idols* and *The Anti-Christ*. (Nietzsche 1990) Do these differences have any importance in the production of an existentialist criminology? Is it possible, for example, to write on the political left, but simultaneously use Heideggerian existentialism as a spring board for talking about ‘Being’ and crime? Should we privilege ontology over ethics, as Heidegger did,<sup>2</sup> and attempt to ignore political issues, or instead turn our focus towards the production of a more political and ethical existentialist criminology? In this thesis, I intend to confront issues relating to

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<sup>2</sup> Although it is widely considered that Heidegger showed little concern for ethics, Joanna Hodge has questioned this opinion in *Heidegger and Ethics*, New York: Routledge, 1995, in which she identifies a repressed ethical dimension in his work.

ontology, ethics and difference through an exploration of the existentialist themes of authenticity, freedom, and nihilism and relate them to the possibilities inherent in criminology. I wish to invoke a change in the discourse of existentialist criminology as it is newly born, and to alter the position of the subjects of enunciation. Hence, important themes of authenticity and freedom will be scrutinised in relation to the data collected, but also through the lens of feminism, specifically the work of Luce Irigaray. Irigaray is the only female philosopher to have responded in detail to the work of Heidegger (Irigaray 1999) and Nietzsche (Irigaray 1991). Additionally, she explicitly makes the case for reflexive embodiment, proposing a philosophy in the feminine as thought by the female body, as a direct alternative to phallo-logocentric philosophies. Although Simone de Beauvoir is generally considered to be the primary female existentialist philosopher, the value of Irigaray's philosophical work has recently been increasingly acknowledged as a powerful tool with which to expose the gendered and exclusionary character of existential phenomenology. (Whitford 1991)

Arguing that man is presented in these disciplines as the universal norm, and that sexual difference is not recognised, she claims that woman has been left behind in the development of philosophy:

A revolution in thought and ethics is needed if the work of sexual difference is to take place. We need to reinterpret everything concerning the relations between the subject and discourse, the subject and the world, the subject and the cosmic, the microcosmic and the macrocosmic. Everything, beginning with the way in which the subject has always been written in the masculine form, as man, even when it claimed to be universal or neutral. (Irigaray 2004:8)

Irigaray's work originates from psychoanalytic and philosophical frameworks, and she does not reject these disciplines. Her philosophical work is vast and encompasses a response to existentialists such as Heidegger, Nietzsche and Merleau-Ponty. Whilst she is well known for her psychoanalytic works *Speculum of the Other Woman* and *This Sex Which is Not One*, her texts on Heidegger and Nietzsche are less well known, or as Mortensen claims have "been silenced or ignored" except for the interest from Whitford, Grosz and Schor. (Mortenson 1994: 19) Ironically, her assertion early on that the most pressing question of our epoch is that of sexual difference stems from Heidegger's claim that "each age is preoccupied with one thing, and one alone." (Whitford 1991: 165) As Heidegger asserted that Being was a question forgotten by philosophy, Irigaray states that the question that remains obscured underneath our ways of thinking is that of sexual difference. The theme of female embodiment runs deep throughout her responses to Heidegger and Nietzsche, sensuously shaping the texts. Her writing is a plea for the acknowledgement of sexual difference and for recognition of the difference that female corporeality can make to the form which thought can take. In Western metaphysics, the mind (masculine subject) has been separated from the body (seen as female and object), and Irigaray makes clever use of this imposed dualism by adopting female embodiment to approach philosophical problems; "If the proximate for Heidegger is being, for Irigaray it is the other body." (Colebrook 1997: 88) She makes an extremely bold claim; that the morphology of the body is reflected in the morphology of particular thought processes; "If the morphology of the male body...has produced the Western metaphysics of representation, then only another type of body can think being otherwise." (Ibid: 88) Whereas Western rationality is marked by assumptions relating to

identity, dualism, individuation or becoming and categorization of subjects, objects and forms, female embodiment would suggest fluidity, ambiguity and instability; “for Heidegger it is being that challenges the identity of the subject, for Irigaray it is the unthinkable and unrepresentable difference of the female body.” (Ibid: 89)

### **Issues in using existentialist phenomenology**

One of the primary criticisms of phenomenology is that it fails to adequately recognize the power of socio-structural restrictions upon individuals, interactions and relationships. This allies with Denzin’s criticism of Goffman’s embodied symbolic interactionism in the form of dramaturgy, referred to earlier in this chapter. In phenomenology, this has been at least partially dealt with by many forms of more ‘social’ phenomenological analysis that acknowledge the historically specific and socially situated nature of human experiences. Although again, criticisms could be levied by purists at the departure from its original forms in philosophy, phenomenology can be sociologically enhanced by incorporating and building upon insights from other theoretical and philosophical approaches such as feminism (see, for example Butler 1997; Grosz 1994; Young 2000, 2005). Phenomenology can achieve Husserl’s original aims of ultimately overcoming Cartesian mind body dualism and still present comprehensive descriptions of phenomena grounded in the lifeworld. As far as existentialists are concerned, we create and are produced by the time-spaces in which we find ourselves, but more sociological forms of phenomenology can explicitly form a

standpoint which incorporates understandings of embodiment and the body which are historically and socially located and constituted.

Although there has been tentative attempts to ally existentialism with symbolic interactionism in criminology (see Hardie-Bick 2011), there is now an opening in criminology for more detailed and in depth sociological phenomenological studies to be carried out. Phenomenology attempts to remain 'true' to the accounts of those who experience crime and anti-social behaviour directly, as opposed to portraying criminals, behaviours and events as numbers or creating abstract theories without grounding them in lived experiences, which is a strength. Also, whilst focusing upon the body and embodiment, it is important to discuss the specificity of time-spaces, the cultural locations of bodily presences and embodied power relations embroiled in the lifeworld. Studies of crime, criminality and anti-social behaviour can potentially simultaneously embrace theoretically the idea of the *inscribed* and *performative* body at the individual, social and political level, and the body as *lived* - as a ground of being-in-the-world, by combining the ideas of symbolic interactionism with existentialist approaches which focus primarily on the body. Through utilising both theoretical approaches, the usual questions arising in criminological studies can still be addressed – but simply from an alternative perspective. This means that the personal can be understood as political, and that the subjective embodied experiences of the individual are not only produced by political and socio-cultural structures, but also affect them through the individual's acts in the performative sense. By combining symbolic interactionism with existential phenomenology, criticisms of phenomenology as being generally neglectful of social structures, historicity, culture and difference are thus addressed.

## **Summary**

This chapter has called for a more explicit turn towards the body and embodiment in criminology. This will involve combining the approaches of embodied symbolic interactionism with a more haptic version of phenomenology; more specifically, the dramaturgical approach of Erving Goffman with existentialist phenomenology. In this chapter, a history of the body in criminology has been provided, which perhaps suggests the reluctance of criminologists to take up the theories of the body and embodiment that other social sciences have been keen to embrace. Following this, an outline of some of the approaches to the body and embodiment in other social sciences such as anthropology has been described. A brief description of the types of phenomenological was outlined, which was followed by a critical discussion of existentialist criminology's manifesto. There have been criticisms laid at both existentialism and dramaturgical sociology. One of the objectives of this thesis is to demonstrate that these criticisms can be addressed to form a re-energised criminology, which considers the simultaneously lived, multi-sensorial, spatial and performative aspects of crime and anti-social behaviour, whilst recognising the diffuse and rhizomatic nature of disciplinary power woven into lifeworlds.

“What comes to face a speaking subject is another speaking subject, and not only the horizon of a world that has been projected from a single discourse whose injunctions alone ought to be acknowledged. From what faces us, another language speaks to us, from beyond the world that we have appropriated. We need to listen to it, without relinquishing the discourse that is already ours.”

(Irigaray 2008: 15)

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Belonging, alterity and the dialectics of community.**

#### **Introduction**

The concept of community has proven to be a matter of great concern for social theorists; “Of all the words in sociological discourse, community is the one that most obviously comes from wonderland, in that it can mean just what you want.” (Smith 1996: 250) Despite this, the notion of community has a substantial history in Western dualistic discourse, and is embedded in ideas about the development from traditional groups to modern ones. This chapter will firstly critically explore the historical construction of the concept of community in the Western imaginary, beginning with the work of Ferdinand Tönnies. Secondly, it will look at how these differing ideas have filtered into policy, particularly those relevant to the research period, and will discuss to what extent this has affected communities similar to Bryn Mawr. Thirdly, it will focus specifically on narratives and understandings of community within Bryn Mawr itself in order to set the scene for the next chapters.

#### **The idea of community**



Many discourses about community can find their roots in the work of Ferdinand Tönnies (1957 [1887]), who first used the terms **Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft** as conceptual tools to determine differences between notions of community and society. Gemeinschaft signified community and was related to ideas about groups living in the pre-industrial era or in rural areas, whereas Gesellschaft referred more to social groups living in industrialised or city areas in the modern world. Max Weber (1968 [1921]) later developed the terms, and gemeinschaft's associations with subjectivity, affect, intimacy and tradition, and gesellschaft's links with rationality, objectivity and conscious consent were seen as fairly unambiguous. Delanty has condemned Tönnies' community as a fundamental "myth of modernity" which should never have been positioned as the dialectic of society. (2010: 21-23)

However, the opposition of the two terms was further maintained in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when ethnographers described communities as being holistic self-contained units with little internal conflict. In both anthropology (see, for example Malinowski 1913, 1922) and sociology (see Durkheim 1893), community was symbolically linked to ideas of rural, primitive or pre-industrial social groups in which there was an assumed unity between people, their beliefs and their locality. These communities lived close to nature; "the birthplace served as a second mother, sheltering with its landscape, nourishing with its fruits, comforting with its surroundings and with its customs." (Irigaray 2005: 13) In such an idealised community, resources, beliefs and moral values were shared

in a socially cohesive system. Community as such became an idea driven by an enduring nostalgia for a past, where it is/was thought that there were close social relationships, a perceived harmony and sharing of beliefs, as opposed to the conflict, change and uncertainty associated with industrialisation and modernisation.

Indeed, industrialisation and modernisation appeared to signal a decline in community life, as people moved to cities and became increasingly isolated from each other and detached from the old sense of place. Traditional communities have ordinarily been described in relation to geographical location; "In the typical community, the sense of belonging was said to be associated within the social relations within the particular geographic area." (Stacey 1969: 135) It has been argued that the concept of community could simply be redefined in terms of locality and place in order to gain an increased understanding (Cooke 1989). A member of the Chicago School, Louis Wirth (1964) appropriated the work of Tönnies, Weber and Durkheim, in his 1938 analysis of urban life which focused on producing a theory related to densely populated areas. He argued that people were more likely to become isolated in areas of high population because they largely ignored what went on around them in order to cope with the social changes occurring due to mobility and short term social relationships. Relationships thus became based upon dislike, the likelihood of personal benefit or simply ambivalence; "The contacts may be face to face, but they are, nevertheless, impersonal, superficial, transitory and segmental." (Wirth 1964 [1938]: 12) The Chicago School also carried out empirical research into how communities which were defined mainly by their geography intersect and compete in the context of the city (see, for example, Park et al. 1925). Many of these studies focused on what were perceived as transgressive groups such as gangs, drug users and homeless people. The fact that the

Chicago School's work focused upon transient communities in the city marked a rupture from previous work on community which allied it only to static rural life. Their work relied upon the idea of the 'naturalness' of spatially segregated social groups, most notably illustrated in Burgess' concentric zone theory, and their collective work could arguably be described as one of the first which, although not explicitly, calls into question the nature/culture binary.

Bell and Newby (1976) discussed three ideas related to the concept of community which had been commonly appropriated by social scientists. Firstly, they determined that community was a geographical term for a specific locale or settlement inhabited by humans. Secondly, they acknowledged its popular use as a term to describe the social links between people living in a particular place. Thirdly, the idea of community has been utilised in order to describe a closer connection between people that is not necessarily determined by where they live, which signifies a "decoupling of the sense of community from the sense of place." (Hogget 1997: 7) McMillan and Chavis (1986) stated that communities can exist outside of a specific location if four fundamental aspects are in place. These are membership of the community, the members' influence on the community and vice versa, the reproduction of member identity and affective connections between members. Crow and Allen (1994) have emphasised the significance of community for sociologists as a principal variable in a diversity of settings. However, all communities, no matter how they are defined, have been distinguished by a shared sense of identity among members, and Cohen (1985) has drawn attention to the fact that the idea of community cannot be disconnected from the concept

of identity, which of course necessarily involves defining self from other, and the experience of alterity.

Community was defined by Romero as “an association of individuals that are sharing and creating ways of interpreting their experiences, which builds a particular identity connecting individuals and groups reinforcing their common issues without effacing their differences.” (1998: 52) Identity and community are always interlinked with difference, as identity is formed through what is other. The idea of community can be used interchangeably with race and ethnicity, language group, nation and concepts of insiders and outsiders. Community can be employed as a euphemistic tool for creating claims; a way of legitimising identities and concretising power relations. Community is thus also related to conflict such as dualist ideas about inclusion or exclusion, and the boundaries between inside and outside. These boundaries can be symbolically, temporally and spatially marked. Brent has stated that community divides both the internal from the external and results in “internal strife with the forces that oppress it, with the enemy within.” (2004: 214) Further, he argues that communities inevitably involve unequal relationships (ibid: 216) based on structural features such as gender; he therefore concludes that community is the epitome of an entity which is impossible to produce. (Ibid: 220)

As there are so many competing definitions of community which are hard to pin down, (Popple 1995: 3), it could be argued that communities are simply imagined. Benedict Anderson was the first to **use** the term *imagined communities*. He suggested that what we

think of as nations are imagined communities because, despite individuals not meeting all fellow members, in the mind of each individual “lives the image of their communion” (1991: 6). Imagined communities signify social groups who are connected through imagination and not through anything obviously tangible; “Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.” (Ibid) Whilst acknowledging possible inequalities within communities such as his example of the nation-state, Anderson states that they are characterised by a “deep horizontal comradeship.” (1991: 16) In some way then, they are disembodied communities existing in the landscapes of the mind, as opposed to those communities which can be experienced in a concrete, embodied and direct way; for instance in school, in the workplace and in places of worship. As developments in technology and communications advance, the idea of virtual communities spawned in the 1990s has grown alongside them. Although the ‘reality’ of these communities has been questioned, it could be argued that imagination on behalf of members plays a prominent part in their development. Appadurai has stated that on the surface, there seems nothing new in drawing attention to the role of the imagination in the present-day world, especially bearing in mind the historical and contemporary roles of art, myth and legend in creating and sustaining social realities (1996: 5). However, he has also argued convincingly that the imagination is becoming increasingly significant in the post electronic world, as “Ordinary people have begun to deploy their imaginations in the practice of their everyday lives.” (Ibid) These imagined social groupings as concepts then may certainly be closer to *gesellschaft* than *gemeinschaft*, in terms of Tönnies’ and Weber’s development of the terms. Nonetheless, the differentiated concepts of community serve to reinforce the dualism of the body/mind split, and symbolize in evolutionary terms the

passage from nature to culture. The idea of the traditional community lends itself more particularly to being engaged with in an embodied and lived 'real' way, and the more contemporary idea of community as being merely imagined as a theoretical concept, yet both have been dreamed up in the Western masculine imaginary.

Yet it is commonly recognised that emotions play an important role in mobilizing the imagination. Burkett has discussed the imagining and building of communities as acts of "extraordinary creativity in which one comes face to face with the struggle of human relationship, of engaging with an-Other." (2001: 237) This perspective offers a potential opening for an existentialist approach, which acknowledges an ethics of relating. The sense of engagement referred to by Burkett is key to being-in-the-world, and is perhaps summed up by Heidegger's idea of involvement; "By 'Others' we do not mean everyone else but me - those over against whom the 'I' stands out. They are rather those from whom, for the most part, one does not distinguish oneself - those among whom one is too... By reason of this *with-like* Being-in-the-world, the world is always the one that I share with Others." (1962: 154–5) Irigaray's (2005: 14) nostalgic view suggests that this longing for community or sharing the world stems from humanity's loss of connection to the maternal-feminine and nature:

Whereas nature, proximity, dialogue and oral transmission, and local customs served as norms for the community, the social grouping, property, and written codes organize it in a more formal manner with a loss of individual consistency and of relations between human beings. The common is defined by property and not proximity. Community is no longer constituted starting from intimate relations of kinship, from closeness with others, but from the outside, starting from rules, from goods, from borders that are more or less foreign to the subject(s).

Irigaray's argument is a seductive one; with the loss of a community of relating and engaging with others, came an 'artificial' sense of community defined by property, rules and boundaries, again reflecting a transition from nature to a culture which denied any ethical relation. However, Irigaray, veiling and unveiling time, also states that the opening up of the future into a new culture of energy and community has yet to be thought. Irigaray locates this as beginning in a relation between two subjects (see, for example, Irigaray 1993, 1994, 2000, 2004). In her most recent work, Irigaray (2013) radically alludes to community as having been lost through the maternal-feminine, yet observes that it has also not been acknowledged in discourse, so community also has yet to be thought and re-created. Conversely, and following Heidegger's sense of being-with-others, in *The Coming of Community*, Agamben (1993) finds potential for community in singularity. He suggested that only singularity without the requirement for identity can open up the possibility of becoming a community in the future as co-belongings of singularity. This community does not depend on a Rousseauian idealised yearning for an imagined past, but like Irigaray, posits that community has yet to manifest. Both Irigaray's and Agamben's views are radical and emancipatory, although by reducing to singularity in order to form the collective, he differs greatly from Irigaray's persistent observation that before moving into a state of community, humanity must begin by ethically recognising and respecting the first difference; that of sexuation. Agamben uses the example of Tianenmen Square to elucidate his view that future politics will centre upon a struggle between humanity and the state. A similar argument can be seen in Derrida's (2005) take on what he terms *democracie-a-venir*, stemming from his interpretation of the *khora*, as a possible space of event or becoming.

This event, of course, must be prevented at all costs if the structures of patriarchy, notably capitalism are to endure.

Without a doubt, in the decades preceding the period of this research, monumental attempts were made by politicians globally at re-creating a sense of community in order to further political agendas and maintain a sense of docility in the populace. In Britain, New Labour based their efforts on the ideology related to the loss of the traditional community, and consequently, a substantial service industry grew up around this, as a further investment in capitalism.

### **Policy and the idea of the Utopian moral community**

‘Community’ feels good because of the meanings the word community conveys – all of them promising pleasures, and more often than not the kinds of pleasures we would like to experience but seem to miss...in short, ‘community’ stands for the kind of world which is not, regrettably, available to us – but which we would dearly wish to inhabit and which we hope to possess. (Bauman 2001: 1-3)

Hubert Humphrey’s famous statement that “The impersonal hand of government can never replace the helping hand of a neighbour” is an apposite point when considering the ideology of governance through community propagated by New Labour and continued through the following and still current coalition government. Although the research for this thesis began after Tony Blair’s resignation as prime minister in 2007, the legacy of his governance and policy development endured throughout the data collection period from Gordon Brown’s



governance stretching from 2007 to 2010 until the completion of the research in 2011 during the first year or so of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government, when the narrative of community was re-branded to the concept of the Big Society. Throughout his career, Blair has promoted the idea of an ideal community, which extended conceptually from the local to the national and the international:

When I became prime minister, I promised action to tackle the divisions in our community. Divisions which are never starker than when looking at poor neighbourhoods. Communities where crime and drugs are rife, unemployment sky high... (Blair 2002)

His use of the word 'community' here was used interchangeably to both define Britain as a whole and refer to criminalised deprived communities within Britain; "The community appealed to is different in different cases: differently spatialized and differently temporized." (Rose 1999: 172). The continued use of the term resulted in it becoming normative and set the scene for localised communities to be used as tools for governance at a distance to further soft paternalist agendas, such as those inspired by the 2004 report *Personal Responsibility and Changing Behaviour* (Halpern et al 2004). These agendas may be insidious and adaptive; "Government through community, even when it works upon pre-existing bonds of allegiance, transforms them, invests them with new values, affiliates them to expertise and re-configures relations of...exclusion" (Rose 1996: 336). Blair's 2002 speech also shows that individual political interlocutors often concurrently expound the varying ideologies linked to the idea of community in order to mask the political agendas behind new policy initiatives; community could be conceived of in terms of its positive and inclusive elements indicative of the majority as well as in negative and exclusive terms symptomatic of a minority, and on whatever scale was appropriate. As Jock Young (2007: 18) observed,

the enforcement of community values “posits a hermetic localism in an age of globalisation.” Most relevant to this thesis is the fact that Blair was well-known for linking in other ideas such as poverty, crime and anti-social behaviour to ideas about communities that he rhetorically constructed as geographically local, in order to deal holistically with the areas of criminal justice, housing, regeneration, unemployment and education through changes to policy. Further, he also connected the idea of community at the micro-scale with the notion of family, which conflicted heavily with New Labour’s more generalised rhetoric on the acknowledgement of the diverse nature of family and social lives in Britain:

History will call it the Decent Society, a new social order for the Age of Achievement for Britain. We will respect family life, develop it in any way we can, because strong families are the foundations of strong communities. (Blair 1996)

Much of New Labour’s policy with regard to community has come from ideas of ‘communitarianism’ originating in the U.S., most notably the work of Amitai Etzioni (Heron 2001). For Etzioni (1993, 1995, 1997), communitarianism promotes community as more desirable than liberal values. Indeed, the above quote demonstrates that Blair directly followed Etzioni’s belief that the institution of the family is foundational to community. These ideas reflect early academic literature on communities in Britain and Ireland which focused upon kinship ties within the community dating back to the 1940s (Arensburg and Kimball 1940) and the 1950s (Rees 1950; Dennis *et al.* 1956; Williams 1956). Communitarians were called on in the 1990s in order to restore community virtues and moral values in a society which was lacking in morality and responsibility. However, this was not the first time that America and Britain had experienced a desire to revive the idea of the

community, as around the time that Tönnies explicitly described the differences he perceived between community and society, a number of Utopian communities were being set up in America and Britain. On the surface, these were instigated as acts of resistance to the demands of modern life and industrialisation; "The communitarian impulse was galvanized by the longing that many people in the nineteenth century experienced for a sense of community. A decline in the wider sense of community was identified beyond utopian circles. Attempts to engineer politically unthreatening communities were made by philanthropic, but essentially paternalistic, capitalists." (Hardy 1979: 11). As the increase in relative deprivation resulted in a growing discontent amongst Joe Public, it became clear that New Labour had to act in order to maintain a docile population, in what Foucault (1973, 1977, 1979, 1988) terms a process of disciplinisation, a part of which involves the populace being faced with complying to a set of demands in order to appear 'normal'. One aspect of this normalcy is belonging to a socially functional community.

Etzioni (2007) extended this idea to include international clusters such as the EU in order to concretize cohesion and shared values, another point adopted by New Labour in a move towards developing the increasing homogenisation of Western beliefs. Fremeaux has also noted Etzioni's propensity towards defining communities as social networks with shared values, and that those members who transgress moral norms should be reprimanded. (2005: 269).

It was assumed, for example, that most crime resulted from inequality, and that once inequality was reduced, crime would inevitably decline. Without denying the connection, New Labour took a different view. Tony Blair's 1997 manifesto pledge "tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime" was not just a slogan; it was adopted as a principle of policy. (Giddens 2010)

John Rodger (2008) refers to this left realist approach to dealing with both crime and the widely agreed causes of crime as a process of criminalising social policy, most notably manifested in discourses of anti-social behaviour. These discourses on anti-social behaviour will be explored in depth in the following chapter. Many of these dialogues relating to anti-social behaviour were inspired by the 'broken windows' thesis, established by Wilson and Kelling in 1982. The authors followed their first article by another in 1989 that focused upon making neighbourhoods safe and offered possible applications of their theory. Wilson and Kelling (1989: 34) stated:

If the first broken window in a building is not repaired, then people who like breaking windows will assume that no one cares about the building and more windows will be broken. Soon the building will have no windows. Likewise, when disorderly behaviour - say, rude remarks by loitering youths-is left unchallenged, the signal given is that no one cares. The disorder escalates, possibly to serious crime.

The authors continued by suggesting that these types of events are more likely to occur in areas regarded as having high levels of social disorganization, low levels of informal social controls, and poor collective efficacy. When behaviour is left unchecked and property not looked after, a downward spiral of deterioration and a collapse of informal community controls results. As the area plummets into decline, stable family units leave and single adults with weak social bonds move in. This creates a stage for violence and more serious offences. Other pre-existing residents may worry about going out and getting involved in doing anything to prevent further criminal activity. The broken windows model of the proliferation of crime in specific areas has been reflexively intertwined with discourses on

community, and thus crime prevention strategies, notably the co-production of community safety.

### **Community safety**

The community in its static form can be conceived of as a place where people develop a sense of ontological security (Giddens 1984, 1991) which can be broadly defined as a security of being. Young (2003: 400) refers to this state of affairs as simply an “identity crisis”, related to the “undermining of a sense of locality – of physical space of belonging.” The idea of a Utopian community which provides a sense of belonging, and which embodies security, safety and reciprocity among its people underpins much of the thinking of criminologists and policy makers, and there is a plethora of work on discourses surrounding the prevention of crime and community safety (see, for example, Crawford 1997, 2007; Gilling 2007; Hughes 1998, 2007). Edwards and Hughes (2009) refer to these discourses as the “preventive turn” in England and Wales. This move towards specifically oriented community based crime prevention was initiated at least in discussions and reports in the 1980s, and made concrete in the 1990s to promote safer communities through partnership working. Edwards and Hughes refer to the idea of community safety as a “floating signifier” (ibid: 64), which as a policy, operates in state attempts to simultaneously police and control local communities and deliver welfare and preventive interventions. Additionally, it could be argued as being a clever mechanism of the state to shift responsibility onto communities, and a useful apparatus against which to apportion blame away from the government if things go wrong.

Edwards and Hughes also point out that within policy discourses, “the ‘community’ is ordinarily presented in local strategies as a spatial and moral notion, which highlights locality, belonging and unity.” (Ibid: 68) However, there is also a widespread propensity to position certain groups as outside of the community due to their ‘anti-social’ behaviour, which emphasises the primary role of boundary production and exclusion in descriptions of community. Both Crawford (1999) and Prior (2005) have drawn attention to the fact that appeals to the community to help deal with anti-social behaviour are counter-productive as, rather than building social capital, they instead encourages intolerance and distrust. This is a result of what Young has referred to as the *bulimia* of the social system (2003: 394), a point which will be returned to later. However, these observations were supported by much of the data collected for this study.

Additionally, communities are usually passive with regard to being ‘consulted’, as opposed to being active contributors to the planning and delivery of community safety (Hughes 2008). Partnership meetings packaged as ‘community consultations’ and ‘civic engagement exercises’ belie a reality that the police and local authorities, legally obliged to plan and deliver crime prevention and community safety, have dominated the events created to engage interested social groups (Rodger 2008: 162). Certainly, during field work observations at several Policing and Community Team (PACT) meetings, the agenda was dominated by the police and local agencies in order to relay information and describe what ‘positive’ actions had been taken in order to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, whereas members of the community were given limited ‘air time’ to voice their concerns –

although these were duly noted. However, considering the size of Bryn Mawr, usually only a handful of residents turned up, which suggests that although civic engagement and community consultation was part of the theoretical process of planning and delivery, only a small percentage of members of the community had anything pressing to say on the matter, and many were clearly too apathetic to become actively involved. Moreover, attitudes of the police altered over time; for instance, when the worst problems regarding youth offending had been resolved, one high ranking police officer stated that the community should be aware that many of the young people involved in offending had many problems of their own to contend with, acknowledging the ordinarily suppressed underlying reality that many young people who offend are also often victims of crime themselves (Revill 2008; Muncie 1999).

Edwards and Hughes' comments regarding the concept of community safety as useful for intertwining social policy and crime in local and national government, resulting in the promotion of more reductionist narratives about crime (2009), invoke a call for new ways of looking at the idea of community, and the perception of crime itself. Ultimately, community safety refers to the feeling of being ontologically secure and unthreatened within a group. Bauman states that the "privilege of being in a community means gaining security, which can never be fully reconciled with freedom – hence being in a community entails a loss of freedom, defined as autonomy, the 'right to self-assertion' and the 'right to be yourself.'" (2001: 4) Consequently, being in a community as defined by the parameters of government policy could arguably be positioned at odds with the existentialist concept of freedom. Contrary to Bauman, Derrida has characterised communities as being founded upon a

violence, which makes them dangerous (1992), in that collectives erase difference in attempts to assimilate into them alternative ways of being. The Communities First agenda, as part of the process of criminalising social policy, represents this drive towards a more 'civilized' society, whilst simultaneously harking back to the concept of community, historically constructed as primitive and traditional and in need of modernisation and control. One of the key policies of Communities First was to promote social inclusion and equality within the community and assimilate persons outside the perceived hegemonic majority; young people, elderly people, transgressive or marginal people. Irigaray (2005: 96-97) refers to these types of agendas as "searching for [a] way between an objective but abstract construction in which [humanity] is alienated from itself", referring to the "socio-political ideology of equality without differences." Or perhaps, attempts at assimilation through localised communities could be likened to The Borg in *Star Trek*, a postmodern popular culture television series which charts the travels of a spaceship through the Universe to different planets, with obvious comparable aspects to the anthropologist or sociologist exploring social groups. The Borg, of course are an antagonistic collective and represent the enemy of differences; the species that assimilates others into the hive or collective mind, or the culture of the same.

### **Bryn Mawr: the will to community**

All-powerfulness and All-presence, this is what one always asks of the community or what one seeks in it: sovereignty and intimacy, presence to self without flaw and without any outside. One wants the 'spirit' of a 'people' or the 'soul' of a gathering of 'faithful', one wants the 'identity' of a 'subject' or its 'propriety'. (Nancy 2003:24)



From 2007, the location of Bryn Mawr at the outset became a top-down community project, funded through Communities First, an initiative of the Welsh Assembly Government. The funding was distributed to areas which were assessed as high in poverty, notably child poverty, based on the Welsh Index of Deprivation. The Welsh Government has three strategic objectives: Prosperous Communities, Learning Communities and Healthier Communities (Welsh Government 2013). The aim was to embroil the community in capacity building, a term which itself is embedded in post-colonial discourses of development aimed at modernising communities in the “Third World” to facilitate escape from poverty and exclusion through enhancing skills and competencies of local peoples. Bryn Mawr, like many of the other communities receiving funding from Communities First, was demarcated by place, suggesting already a traditional view of community, defined by its geography rather than any symbolic, cultural or political representations or shared interests. Due to the variety of individuals living in Bryn Mawr and the internal conflicts which had been the focus of local agency attention, geography may well have been the only unifying factor to latch onto to demarcate the area. Bryn Mawr was thus to be re-imagined and its internal and disparate social groups integrated into the project and consequently the community. Far from being a blueprint for the creation of a ‘perfect’ community, the reality was that several key social groups were focused on which were deemed to require the most assistance in actively engaging in community life; the elderly, poorer families and disadvantaged children and young people. In effect, Communities First programmes were ultimately aimed at ameliorating poverty and reducing exclusion in order to reduce threats to the competitive, capitalist and atomistic world view that had created the situation in the first place. This

involved a degree of what is colloquially termed 'nannying', otherwise known as soft paternalism, or in Foucauldian terms, disciplinisation. This was explicitly expressed by John, a Communities First Worker:

John: People have got to be led into these kind of projects. They are not over-subscribed, we try to get people to book a place, you know. I think these projects reduce crime and anti-social behaviour because there is this feeling of knowing who the kids next door are, it's when you don't know...

During the data collection period, I was able to both spend time with and interview all of the key workers at Communities First. They were able to give me valuable information regarding the social make-up of the community. Daniel saw Bryn Mawr as an overall community comprised of different groups, according to age and length of time lived in the community:

Daniel: I have worked round here for donkeys' years, and Bryn Mawr has always been a strong community, and I still think it is, although it is really huge in terms of an estate, if you want to call it that, because really it's about 2 or 3 estates; you know, you've got certain areas which are older, certain areas which are newer. I know it is one big area, but still, there is a strong community here.

Claudine: do you think that is across the board, whether people are locally born or they have come in from other areas?

Daniel: yeah, I think so. You'll always have people who have been in the community much longer than others, but there's a nice sense of community. For instance, when we put things on or support things in the community, you see that. It's a real melting pot.

Communities First organised many different events during the research period through regeneration funding. These included collaborations with the Youth Offending Team and play scheme organisers. Often, these took place during school holidays, when young people

were more likely to engage in offending behaviours due to boredom or a lack of social controls. Other projects, such as the Garden Exchange, allotment scheme and 'Bryn Mawr is Green' were reminiscent of historical attempts to align the 'community' with nature, such as the garden cities of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Buder 1990; Ward 1992). The utopian ideal behind the creation of such places was to embed the community in a more natural context. Ironically, Bryn Mawr is on the periphery of a rural town and open countryside is just a twenty minute walk away. Yet although young people find 'natural' spaces within the vicinity of Bryn Mawr, these are not legitimised areas for the residents to use, and have been associated with drug use and anti-social behaviour. During the research period, new allotments and a garden exchange project helped to create more natural environments for families to use and encourage a move towards more eco-friendly living, even though, due to relative deprivation, Bryn Mawr was likely to have a much lower carbon footprint than many more affluent areas. The 'Bryn Mawr is Green Festival' project aimed to create a woodland space that the community could use, that felt close to nature. It also provided useful workshops to address the 'positive' aspect of poverty in the form of thrift such as recycling clothes, repairing bicycles and cooking with left-overs. The advertising for the event appealed to residents' need for thrift – by offering free light bulbs and learning how to save money. More particularly, it appealed directly to a desire to belong; "Be part of the community – make it strong and vibrant!" (Website advertisement anonymised)

Bryn Mawr was one of thirteen Communities First areas in Wales to cease to be funded in 2012, as it did not fit within the top 10% of deprived wards in Wales. Daniel informed me that up until the point where the coalition government took over, there should have been a

lot more capacity building in order to enable communities to sustain themselves beyond funding, such as the creation of a community council or forum. He strongly believed that it would be easier and more beneficial to Bryn Mawr residents to have something like Communities First continuing to be in place. However, since the research period finished, Bryn Mawr do have a 'community forum', which is run by volunteers; something which would not have happened without Communities First's interventions in the area.

### **Time, memory, belonging and strangeness**

Bearing in mind the fact that the discourse of community is already highly contested, this section seeks to explore the tensions in differing narratives, perceptions and experiences of community in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour, nostalgia, memory and belonging in Bryn Mawr. One of the first questions I asked interviewees was whether they felt that they were a part of or that they belonged to 'the community of Bryn Mawr'. Putnam has suggested that "our deepest sense of belonging is to our most intimate social networks, especially family and friends. Beyond that perimeter lie work, church, neighbourhood, civic life, and the assortment of other 'weak ties'." (Putnam 2000: 274). For Delanty, "Community is more likely to be expressed in an active search to achieve belonging than in preserving boundaries" (2010: 153).

For young people living in Bryn Mawr, family and friends were central to ideas about community. Several younger residents went as far as to say that community safety was

determined by family name if it represented established residents and the size of your family dwelling in the area.

Lucy: I think it depends on your name to be honest

Claudine: As in, if you're local or not?

Lucy: If you're from a well known family, the people are not going to pick on you, are they, cause they're gonna be like, oh well, if I pick on them, then like, they have big brothers or big sisters or people like that

Claudine: So, people from bigger local families are quite sort of protected?

Lucy: Yeah, yeah

Ralph Linton stated that there are two ancient social units which endure; the family group and the local group which is a combination of families. He argued that the local group was the starting point for all "political and territorial units such as tribes and nations." (1936: 209) Long term residents in Bryn Mawr believe that in the past the community, as spatially defined, consisted of a local group made up of families who were established residents in the area. For some, the sense of a community in Bryn Mawr exists only in the past, and potentially in the future, but not in the present. People who have been resident in the area for many years have seen substantial changes in the last twenty years. Some of these changes fall within the wider contexts of globalisation and developments in communication technologies. Long term residents remembered glorious childhoods growing up in Bryn Mawr, when families got together to play games, or go sledging together when it snowed and take part in regular fêtes. They remember not having much money but recount memorable events such as New Year's Eve, when mothers would get together and walk around the estates banging on saucepans with wooden spoons. The sense of community was constructed informally and organically from bottom-up, without any other agenda than

just having fun and being present through being-with-others or relating. “Community is nowadays another name for paradise lost – but one which we dearly hope to return, and so we feverishly seek the roads that may bring us there.” (Bauman 2001: 3)

A point of interest arose from the data collected through interviews carried out with relatively new residents in the area. Whilst longer term residents see community as an established group of people specifically living in Bryn Mawr, Tim, who was a relative newcomer to the area, understands community in much broader national terms and also felt that ‘real’ community is a thing of the past, bound up in an era in which class defined social groups:

I don’t think anywhere in Britain is united, I think we used to be quite united and peasants revolt, the peasants are revolting (laughs) and all the rest of it...I think Thatcher finished that off, didn’t she? She put a knife in that....but erm, I think we struggle to try and be a community...and be united...you know, capitalism has sort of strangled all that though, hasn’t it? It’d be nice though...

During the research period, the country plunged into deeper recession; clearly as the economy suffered, so did employment levels. Some residents who were interviewed as part of this research explicitly connected unemployment and relative deprivation with crime and anti-social behaviour, even although many had themselves ‘been poor’ all their lives. Local residents were more likely to connect crime and anti-social behaviour to incomers from other areas in Britain, rather than apportion any blame to long term residents. They believed that incomers were more problematic because they did not want to work, rather than because they had to deal with genuine financial or economic problems:

Everyone knew each other but it went a bit pear shaped when the DSS lot moved in with all the problems, it was always called the Bronx! (Gwennan)

It is since we got all the problem families from the Midlands dumped here that things have gone bad. They are a rough lot and they teach our kids all this bad behaviour. I have been told on the quiet that the council takes money from the Midlands' councils to house these people. They're the ones who cause problems because they have come from bad areas. And they don't want to work either. They take housing from us. There was a bungalow that should have gone to a local family and instead it went to this couple from the Midlands who are supposed to be disabled, they take all these benefits and sit in the pub smoking and drinking all day, and she even said to me, 'we call it our holiday home'; it's disgusting. (Annette)

'Incomers' or strangers then, are often seen as the root of all crime and anti-social behaviour, and are viewed as a threat to the idea of a local settled community. Whether this threat is real or not in terms of representations in crime figures is perhaps irrelevant to the longer term resident; "...for the most part, what we see is the creation of a "fiction of the other"...a fiction that is based upon subjective factors such that the other is not experienced as truly alteric, but as an extension of the subject." (Hazell 2009: 42) These findings reflect the findings of Elias and Scotson (1965), who described their research in a village in Leicestershire between 1958-1960, which studied the uncomfortable relationships between existing long term residents and incomers. In Bryn Mawr, established residents are suspicious of incomers regardless of their material status or behaviours because they are unfamiliar. If one incomer's behaviour is deemed unacceptable, the established residents' views are compounded. Becker (1963: 9) elaborated upon a similar viewpoint directly in relation to deviance, which was defined as "a consequence of the responses of others to a person's act...the process of labelling may not be infallible; some people may be labelled deviant who in fact have not broken a rule." This was confirmed as happening in Bryn Mawr by John, a Communities First worker:

A lot of the areas such as Heol y Mynach and Rhodfa Helyg are established communities. The problem is, you do get new housing estates and strangers move in, and then people don't know who they are. And if people don't know who they are, then people make assumptions.

Robert, a long term non-Welsh resident, who has been active in the community in terms of crime prevention, described the 'global' nature of crime and anti-social behaviour, even when it was confined to a geographical location such as Bryn Mawr. He understood the tension between insiders and outsiders and the desire to assign blame to a particular aspect of Bryn Mawr, and was particularly concerned about the influence of the internet on young people; even more so than negative influences in the education system or on the street.

Claudine: Do you think [the inclination for young people to engage in anti-social behaviour and crime] is maybe passed down through families - siblings and so on?

Robert: I think so, yep, yep.

Claudine: Do you think it is mainly down to a local element, then, locally born kids, or ones that have moved into the area, or a mixture?

Robert: Everyone wants to blame all the families moving in but at the end of the day, some of the local kids are just as bad. But I will admit, people were saying that the kids from outside, especially the ones at Maes Blodau were moving in from outside the area and brought all the bad habits here, but they pick all of this up on the internet, they can all see what's going on with the rest of the country. I mean, happy slapping never actually came here, there were a few incidences, but all that was on the internet, and that was all the chavs at the bus stops going round and slapping people.

Becker observed that existing rules may be applied differentially, depending on the person committing the deviant act and who the victim is (1963: 12). Following Cohen and Short (1958), Becker pointed out, for instance, that boys from middle class areas are often treated very differently to boys from 'slum areas', even when the infraction of the rule is identical. It was observed throughout the fieldwork period that children from established families in the



locale who may have behaved in an anti-social manner were likely to be dealt with less punitively than young persons who were incomers, principally those living on two particular streets, at which intensive local agency involvement was aimed. This possibly also related to which secondary school they attended and seemed irrespective of which social group of young people they were part of. Residents who have lived in the area for several decades or more who were expressing the sense of nostalgia for the past referred to earlier, directly relate the discontentment with contemporary life to a fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. Long term residents agreed that in the past, there was a friendly awareness of others in the community which allowed people to resolve issues amicably between themselves, especially with regard to young people. This was signposted as something which can no longer happen because of the unknown or strange other:

Before, everyone knew each other. We used to have a carnival every year that brought the community together. We could leave our front doors open because everyone trusted each other. If one of the kids was naughty or caused trouble, their mum or dad would just knock on your door and tell you what had happened and we would all sort it out. Now there is no trust and everyone is suspicious of everyone. Like, you see people around all the time that you have never seen before. Then before you can get to know them, they could have moved on again. (Sharon)

This demonstrates how the idea of the stranger, the embodiment of perceived difference and object of suspicion operates within the area, yet “the ‘other’ presents us with the future and possibilities and a chance for growth. The other also presents us with the possibility of annihilation. We thus both wish to encounter and to avoid encountering the other.” (Hazell 2009: 95) As Bauman has said, strangers are people who do not fit our “cognitive, moral, or aesthetic maps[s] of the world...they befog and eclipse boundary lines which ought to be clearly seen” (1995: 200); in short, they threaten our ontological security and represent

“unsafety incarnate” (Bauman 2001: 145). Strangers are distinctly proximate and distant, both temporally and spatially, and as unknown and perhaps unknowable entities, serve as mirrors for post-modern existential anxieties. Strangers are thus useful to ‘think with’. Park (1928) realised this and began to think through mobility and the significance of the stranger in his work *Human Migration and Marginal Man*. Simmel (1950: 402) was one of the first sociologists to write about the significance of the stranger to communities in which the stranger desires to reside in the geographical sense;

If wandering is the liberation from every given point in space, and thus the conceptual opposite to fixation at such a point, the sociological form of the stranger, presents the unity, as it were, of these two characteristics. This phenomenon too, however, reveals that spatial relations are the only condition on the one hand, and the symbol on the other, of human relations. The stranger is thus being discussed here, not in the sense often touched upon in the past, as the wanderer who comes today and goes tomorrow, but rather as the person who comes today and stays tomorrow.

Simmel’s stranger thus invokes a sense of nearness and remoteness in that he or she is present in a spatially defined community, but is not of it, so the stranger is also ‘out of place’, so to speak. This threatens both individual psychological unity and any sense of community cohesion or harmony. The central character Meursault in Camus’ classic novel *L’Etranger* is initially portrayed as purposeless, irrational, close to nature, detached from society, immoral and the embodiment of chaos. He could arguably be said to represent being-toward-death. Strangers or outsiders are perhaps often perceived as such, as symbols of the opposite values to what is held onto in order to maintain ontological security. Analogically, as a concept, the stranger can be allied to the feminine in western philosophy,

and Nancy's comments on the function of the stranger in particular mirror Irigaray's perception of the feminine in the male imaginary:

It is necessary, against an 'altruistic' morality too blandly recited, to hold onto the rigour of the relationship to the stranger, wherein strangeness is a strict condition of existence and presence. And it is necessary to hold onto that, which, out in front of us, exposes us to the sombre, radiating dispersal of our own future and of our own fissure. (Nancy 2003: 25)

### **Being in isolation**

Some people interviewed, who had moved into the area within the two years preceding the research period wanted to remain as strangers and completely resisted the idea of becoming part of the community. They saw themselves as having no choice but to live there due to unfortunate current circumstances, as opposed to wishing to settle there in the long term. Josh only played football with his mates to 'have an occasional kick about' but otherwise kept himself to himself because he didn't wish to engage in any meaningful way with other young people who he saw as problematic, so he generally made attempts to avoid encountering them. Caroline, a single parent, was determined not to be a mere statistic in social housing and was demoralised because she had to share a small flat with her two children, despite the fact that the flats were, at the time, being modernised under a regeneration programme.

Claudine: Do you feel a part of this community now, or do you feel separate?

Caroline: I don't feel part of the community because I don't want to be part of it, because I am just here temporarily, so I think there is a really

strong community spirit here but you have got to open yourself up, and you've got to be very accepting of everyone...

Claudine: And you don't feel that you want to do that?

Caroline: No, not at the moment, no.

Claudine: So, you're hoping to move? Actually out of Bryn Mawr again? Or to another better house in Bryn Mawr?

Caroline: Yeah. Out of Bryn Mawr I would like, yeah.

Claudine: OK, so why is that then?

Caroline: Because I have noticed a real change in my daughter, just since being here, when we lived in LLanbadarn, she never ever went out after 5 or 6 o'clock in the evening. And now all of a sudden, children are flocking at the door at 7 o'clock, want to go to Morrisons, and erm. Yeah, so she is exposed to a whole new generation of rules which just didn't exist before.

Claudine: And how have you found that as a parent? Are you stopping her from going out at night?

Caroline: I've found that I have become bat-like, whereas before she would never go out in the dark. But yeah, she understands the danger so...we're all adjusting to it at the moment.

Claudine: Do you hope that when you leave Bryn Mawr, things will go back to how they were?

Caroline: I don't know whether it's the transition of moving here, or whether it is her age, so I can't say for sure because she is at the age where I let her go to town anyway, and the natural progression of her age is that she can do more now that she has started secondary school but I am hoping that she is not so influenced by the other children that are allowed out 'til 9 at night.

Claudine: So, erm, going back a bit, you said there was a community spirit here. Do you think that extends to all parts of the community? As in, do you think poorer people mix well with the wealthier? You know, different social groups all tolerate each other and get on?

Caroline: I think for me, because I have been thrown right in the deep end, and I've come straight to the worst flats, well, people assume they're the worst flats in Bryn Mawr, I feel that – yeah, it's a difficult one because most people here, well actually a lot of people have all started off in these flats. And since being here now, you know, there's people – it's typically statistical; downstairs we have the alcoholic, I'm now the single mother, we've got you know, a strange couple, that you just don't talk to (laughs),

you know, it's just very...yeah, a lot of people have begun here, and then because there's so many council properties here, they've just spread out...

The part of Bryn Mawr in which Caroline was forced to live, together with a range of unknown young people calling for her daughter in the evening merely strengthened her resolve to move away as soon as possible. It is indeed noteworthy that some incomers to Bryn Mawr experience the same fear of strangers who are existing residents. The views of two young people below sum up how many felt:

I feel quite separate [from the community], because there are some people who are very rough who live in Bryn Mawr, but I'm not a rough kid at all...(Sarah)

I don't feel part of the community, especially because where we used to live, in the flats, we got very stereotyped because basically druggies and people who have just come out of prison live there...it was quite stressful actually...some of the people who did live round us were quite nasty people. (Daisy)

Although the flats have been refurbished by the new housing association, the consensus among residents of Bryn Mawr is that they are symbolically associated with decay and disorder. Many families are housed there initially prior to being allocated a house. The data collected from the residents who were interviewed who lived, or who had previously lived in the flats, together with casual conversations during fieldwork revealed that there was no sense of community between residents at all; indeed, time spent there was characterised by conflict and anxiety, or simply ignoring other residents. Lee and Newby (1983: 57) also observed, that even though people live close to one another as neighbours, this does not guarantee that they socialise with each other. Some of the relatively new residents who had moved into the more recently built housing estates had begun to feel a part of a

community, but only in relation to a sense of community on the new estates such as Maes Blodau, rather than the whole of Bryn Mawr. However, Andy stated that most incomers living on the new estates keep themselves to themselves, although he concurred with the consensus that “most people were in the same boat, living off benefits or low incomes.” Mark, another resident on a new estate described the transient nature to the estate and his unwillingness to socialise with other tenants:

They have tenants come and go. The Housing Association was evicting people, all the known trouble makers. This one family has some influence on them. She has alcohol problems. They have street parties, parties in their gardens. The Housing Association tried to get everybody more together. They invited us to have a drink with them, but we didn't go.

Anna explained that there is a strict boundary between home owners and social housing tenants in the overall area, but in her street, it felt more inclusive as people were in the same situation – they had all come from different areas in Wales and England, and many were living on state benefits or were on low incomes. Nonetheless, the community on her estate was generally seen to be atomised and shifting as people moved in and out, although certain social groupings remained fairly stable:

Anna: A lot of people come, and a lot of people go, it's not exactly static. I know the old people down on Stryd Gwyrdd stick together, and a lot of the neighbours down at Maes Blodau are quite friendly with each other. But up here it is more isolated. I used to know Jyoti over the road, quite well, but she left because of racial harassment.

Claudine: So, some people aren't that tolerant of each other?

Anna: No, not when they're different to them. So, for example, the kids are taking the micky out of my accent, which they think is quite posh, and as I said, Jyoti got a lot of racial abuse, well her son did anyway, so anything that is slightly different....

Andy saw the social divisions primarily according to age; there are certain age groups of people who have been at school together, and the children and young people hang out generally in their age groups. Andy has lived in Wales most of his life and his mother was Welsh, but he does not speak the Welsh language and considers himself more English:

I haven't found Welsh and English such a division here as when I lived in Capel Badrig, and when I was being brought up in Llanbedr, there were so many English people that moved in there....so, there was a big divide between Welsh and English.

An interview with a youth worker for Communities First also emphasised the fact that many people feel 'left out' of the mainstream established community, particularly people living on the new housing estates:

Claudine: As a result of working for Communities First, do you feel that you have become part of the community?

Jill: Yes, definitely.

Claudine: Do you think the community here is like one community?

Jill: There are part of Bryn Mawr that feel they're a community, and there are parts that of Bryn Mawr that feel that they're left out.

Claudine: OK, so what types of people feel left out and what types feel part of the community?

Jill: From the people that I have met, people that move in, especially the people that have been housed in places like Stryd Gwyrdd and Maes Blodau, that they don't feel as much a part of the community as say, somebody that was living on Rhodfa Derw. They are generally older people, I think how it has worked is that families have just carried on moving along, so that Rhodfa Derw and Rhodfa Gwern and places like that have got the original Bryn Mawr people living in them...I'm not really aware of a cultural thing, I don't know if the Welsh language speaking thing effects Bryn Mawr a great deal.

Claudine: Do you think the people who have lived here longer do their best to accept newcomers?

Jill: No! I just feel that not enough is done to make everybody feel included. I feel that there's a definite them and us, and oh, they live in Maes Blodau. And I think that what was what was very important about doing play days up there to make the children proud of where they actually live, so they could say "oh yes, we're having the play days on our estate!"

Stuart, who was working as a youth worker in the county during the fieldwork period stated that he had to say that Bryn Mawr was united in order to impart a sense of belonging to the young people he supported and worked with. This followed the feelings expressed by Communities First workers, who also clearly wanted the community to appear united to the outside. Stuart went on to provide his personal observations of the people living in Bryn Mawr:

I would like to say, there's massive divides as well. If you look at it at different levels, in the grand scheme of things, we work across the county. There is massive community support there within the houses in different areas, but I would say that those areas are only united by their post code. So an example...Maes Blodau will argue with people from Stryd Gwyrdd. But they're united in the two areas that they live, and I am sure that they'll come together...if you look at the big events, I have seen people generally being very supportive...you've got the Community play schemes...Communities First have actually pulled a lot of people together whereas before, you were getting silly issues, and anti-social behaviour escalating into high risk youth justice level interventions...it was just like so annoying when you put it into perspective really. Bryn Mawr has got this stigma of being a social group in its own right...you hear about the Mawr Mob don't you. For every year I have worked in Youth Offending Services, there has been a definition of a new socio-economic group within Bryn Mawr. I could go down the typical route and say that you've got your single mothers and then families living in housing association properties that are ostracised from other areas, but then again you've got peoples' culture. There's a bit of a Welsh identity there, not a heavy influence, but there is something there...then there is the social group of young people who are marginalised and disengaged from other aspects, and that is quite a strong body...



However, regardless of embedded attitudes among more established residents in the area, there were other variables that people considered important regarding social isolation within the wider geographically defined community. Martin blamed unemployment and improvements in technology for the fact that people are becoming increasingly isolated:

People do not have to go to the dole office to pick up their benefits, it all goes into the bank account now, people do not have to go and withdraw cash, they can just pay for things with their card. They do not have to leave their house which means that people do not need to engage with others anymore and take responsibility for their actions in a socially responsible way.

In Bryn Mawr, there were two oppositional aspects of the community emerging; one static and made up of established families and characterised by security and certainty, the other regarded as transient, uncertain, strange and distinctly other. These were expressed in both temporal and spatial terms and reflect the hotchpotch of conflicting ideas related to the concept of community in social theory.

### **Neighbourhoods, abject neighbours and feuds**

A recurrent theme throughout the data was the discussion of the presence of feuding or fighting between different families and groups within the geographically defined community. Feuding or disputes were more commonplace amongst groups who had lived in close proximity spatially for some time. John, a Communities First worker, suggested it was due to the high density of population, and that people, particularly in those living in the flats and some of the houses which were “crammed together”, needed to “let off steam”

occasionally. Tim revealed how he had “let off steam” after becoming frustrated by the noise made by his neighbour:

A lot of the people I live with...in a very close way...are tolerant of a bit of music, whereas some people aren't and shouldn't be living in flats...I've actually, believe it or not, had to complain myself...a young girl downstairs, a young mother of two, bloke's gone to prison, I heard the word crack-head...but that was him...she was obviously lonely, and she had lots of young teenagers round all the time...I'm not, you know, adverse to someone having a bit of fun, but this was going on through the week, and then...she was kicking them out, they were running round to the front window...and then they'd be banging on the window “let us in, let us in, I've left my coat there” and causing a nuisance, and defecating against the other buildings...and then generally...I ended up just pouring honey over one of them! (laughter)...but I warned them. I said to her “Look, I don't want to sound like this, you know what I mean, this is daft, me complaining!”

New incomers rarely got involved in disputes, or not at least until they had found their feet, and had become comfortable with their surroundings and had developed some social networks or alliances with neighbours. In Maes Blodau, which was a new housing estate, Anna painted a picture of a feuding community with divisions over petty grievances, such as reporting each other to the police for minor misdemeanours. Andy supports this view:

I've lived in Wales quite a long time, and you know family feuds...It can start with nothing, like the kids having a little spat or something...and then it just escalates, so...you don't really wanna start something...the person over the road...the older child pinched someone's girlfriend and they didn't speak for years...so they won't even say hello to each other now

The young people are also aware of divides within their social circles, often due to minor disputes but sometimes as aspects of ongoing feuds between families. Sometimes, these can result in violent episodes. Police assistance is not always requested in these incidents

because they are dealt with internally by members of extended families, which can often perpetuate feuds.

Lucy: I think it's quite violent sometimes, because if someone doesn't like you, people will just, like, start fighting with you or something then, or just harass you all the time and stuff, and just like, look at you and talk about you...but, if you get on with the right people, then, it's not like that, everyone's just friends.

Claudine: So, have you got any examples of fighting?

Lucy: Erm, yeah. There was this girl before, and she used to cause, like a lot of trouble, and used to say things that weren't true, and she got – well people used to beat her up and stuff quite a lot

Claudine: So, did anyone report it or...

Lucy: No! No one reported it! No one really reported anything really, unless someone went home to their families and the families reported it.

Claudine: Right. Did people sort problems out between themselves then?

Lucy: Yeah, I would say...

Claudine: So, if a family member got into trouble, would another family member go and sort it out?

Lucy: Yeah, because if someone gets their families involved, and then their family comes and starts on all the kids... if a certain person gets hurt then they're gonna go back and tell their family and they're not going to be happy and then – it just causes more trouble

Claudine: So, do you think there's quite a bit of family feuding that goes on up there then? Are there any ongoing problems?

Lucy: Yeah, I have heard that – well, my uncle, he's been having a few problems lately up there, and they go to the (pub name) to drink and there's like a new owner, and he went up to my uncle on the weekend on Saturday because my uncle has just split up from his girlfriend and she's like trying to wind him up, and she was talking to this owner in the (pub Name) so my uncle is like, looking at her, but the owner thought he was looking at him, and my uncle went outside and he came out and head butted him and stuff

Claudine: So, the new owners of (pub name) are quite violent then?

Lucy: Well, there's been like a lot of trouble going on up there recently, not just like with my family but like, loads of other people too, like a girl got beat up there last night by two girls..

Claudine: Oh no! How old were they?

Lucy: Well, the girls – I don't remember their names, but the girl that got beat up is only a year older than me and they were like kicking her, and this girl said to her "I'm not going to stop beating you up until you're eating through a straw", and like, the police have got involved and stuff, so it's like out of her hands now. Those two girls were just like kicking her in the head and stuff.

Katie, who has lived in Bryn Mawr all her life, also reported that there is a lot of arguing which splits the community up, and that there are some people who "just don't get on." Young people stated that some arguments are violent, but often temporary. Katie described how arguments between children are "bad arguments, swearing, violence and stuff" but that children then "get back friends." Often young people fight over cigarettes, alcohol or sub-cultural affiliations, but many fights relate to relationships, such as perceived disloyalties and betrayals between friends or boyfriend or girlfriends.

Additionally, young people concur that many fights break out amongst them due to the spreading of rumours and gossip which can happen on the streets, buses or at school. However, most young people agreed that malicious communications on social networking sites such as Facebook were often the most damaging emotionally and often involved many people, suggesting that young people feel more comfortable avoiding face to face confrontations when expressing hostility due to real or imagined slights.

Despite the fact that the information gathered during a particular day-long interview is anomalous to most of the other data gathered specifically on perceptions of divisions within the geographical location of Bryn Mawr, it is worthy of some discussion here. This is because it presents an alternative viewpoint from the perspective of an ex-heroin addict with a wide range of social networks within Bryn Mawr in relation to substance misuse. Although several of the other adults interviewed for this study had 'dabbled' in recreational drug use, and one had issues regarding excessive alcohol consumption, generally they discussed more general ideas about the nature of Bryn Mawr when questioned. Martin was keen to talk about the different aspects of the wider community he saw, as defined by its geographical borders. Drugs had been central to his reality for an extended period of time; he had arrived in Bryn Mawr withdrawing from heroin addiction and had continued to use cannabis. Perhaps as a direct result of this, he understood the community as internally split between drug users and non-drug users, with the latter's opinions about drug users resting upon pre-formed ideas about their general associated behaviours:

There are different sections of the community...the working section of the community do generally frown upon drug use because generally drug users don't work, and generally the sort of people who wind up using drugs tend to be dishonest, violent and criminally orientated. That doesn't mean the drugs make you dishonest or a criminal, right, they don't...but the sort of people who are dishonest and criminal are more likely to wind up doing drugs, so there is a common connection between drugs, dishonesty and criminal behaviour which is not entirely inaccurate and is entirely understandable, but misunderstood in the sense that it is not a cause and effect relationship, the way it is often perceived to be. Initially the stereotype was applied to me by people who didn't know me. Eventually people started to accept the facts of the situation rather than rumours which was all they had to go on because they had more experience and actual knowledge of me to go on, they by and large, refined their opinions and have found I speak to neighbours, we have passing neighbourly communication and occasional lawn-mower borrowing or lost cat assistance and this sort of thing. People don't have an issue about speaking to me or being seen speaking to me or anything

like that. They are all aware that I still exist on the fringes of the drug world, they probably think I smoke too much whacky baccy, but then I don't drink alcohol so I'm not in the pub every night or breaking stuff, you know, so yeah...on the whole, people are OK. I would say that there's three groups; there's the liberal parents who have experimented with drugs, there's very conformist parents who have never experimented with drugs or condoned drugs in any way, and then there are parents who have suffered terribly who have been unable to handle in any way the consequences of addiction...they do not come under the heading of liberal minded experimentalists. These people have had savagely effected blighted lives, it has been seriously hard on adults and children by their inability to cope with addiction whether that is on the legal or illegal side of the law. I mean alcohol addiction as well, I don't think drugs themselves are the problem, I think addiction and how we deal with addiction, willpower and indulgence, deferred gratification – these are the core issues; drugs are simply a very high effect catalyst on these issues.

Note that Martin describes the length of time it took for him to be accepted by other residents in the area and become a member of the neighbourhood, albeit a peripheral one, regardless of the rumours that initially prevented this. Despite the fact that he believes that others know about his previous heroin addiction and his continued use of cannabis, Martin feels that he has become part of a particular neighbourhood's community, whilst remaining 'on the fringes' of a group of drug users.

### **Care in the community**

Martin went on to provide a detailed account of an incident in the drug using community which demonstrated that members are prepared to help others experiencing withdrawal or other difficulties. Additionally, the account shows how Martin, existing on the margins of

using and non-using parts of Bryn Mawr was able to navigate through a difficult situation for two other users:

Karen was massively into drugs. She was selling heroin around the place for a while, although her main drug of choice is speed to be honest, but she had also sourced herself a huge amount of heroin, and she had her own habit and as heroin isn't always available, if you have established an addiction within your system – a physiological addiction – you need to have a plan B. I mean, in places like Sheffield, this probably isn't the case because there will always be somewhere else you can go – around here, there isn't. If a certain number of people don't have any heroin, there simply isn't any heroin, so you have to have an alternative way of stopping yourself becoming very ill. So most of them source and hoard some sort of replacement chemical whether it be methadone or dihydrocodeine or morphine or whatever; there's a number of alternative chemicals that are available to use to ameliorate the effects of withdrawing from heroin. One of them is morphine sulphate which is used medically and prescribed as a powerful painkiller for when people have serious back pain or cancer, it is a very strong painkiller and it does have quite powerful mental side effects; it is very sedative it is very soporific, it is very much like diamorphine. Anyway she had managed to source herself a bottle of these things and the police turned up at her caravan one afternoon, and found them. They also had in their possession a piece of information which told them that a bloke who lives on this estate who has a daily script of morphine sulphate which he has to take and is also a known heroin user and they had this information that this chap sold his tablets from time to time. As it happens, that is not entirely true, he is a really nice guy and he has been known to give away a couple to people who have come unstuck and wound up in a withdrawing situation and unable to get any heroin – one or two of them have been known to go round and beg a couple of his pills of him, just to get through the day, and he has obliged them. It is a very insignificant thing, it has hardly ever happened, but it has happened, and the police have heard about this and found this massive stash of morphine sulphate tablets in Karen's caravan, instantly put two and two together, the way they do, wrote to this chap's doctor, and said he's been selling his pills and the doctor cut him off instantly, so the only way this bloke could think of sorting this problem out was to come to me, because I was the only person he knew who could talk to the doctor, talk to Karen and talk to the police. I managed to write a couple of letters and talk to the people and within a week, the guy had a letter back from the doctor saying right, I am sorry, there was unreliable evidence, we'll put you back on the script. Now, that sort of thing happens quite a lot. In that sort of drug community, I have that sort of legacy, and that is quite recent that is. People will still come and seek me out if they have that sort of problem. They need to talk to people, they don't know how to talk to them, they'll

come and ask me to help. I enjoy that, yes. I get a satisfaction out of being thought of like that. The ex-heroin using community and the current using community can be quite supportive of each other but that depends on the individual people. There is a wide perception of heroin addicts as deceptive selfish and manipulative. Heroin does not make you into those things, but those sort of people are more likely to become heroin addicts, so yeah, there are heroin addicts who are like that. You can't blame drugs for how you are.

Martin occupies a potentially powerful doubly marginal position in that he is able to simultaneously adopt or resist different identities within Bryn Mawr, through the occupation of different subject positions, fulfilling Arensburg's (1969: 11) analogical observation that "no bees have only one hive." Goffman (1963: 158) has observed that many individuals may play different roles of 'normal' or 'stigmatised' during their lifetime. Martin sees himself and his role within Bryn Mawr as one of those individuals who Goffman describes as being able to "within a brief social moment...perform both shows, exhibiting not only a general capacity to sustain both roles, but also the detailed learning and command necessary for currently executing the required role behaviour." (Ibid) As part of the drug using network with Bryn Mawr, Martin was able to confirm that in all parts of Bryn Mawr, including stigmatised groups, care was displayed between members. Care is another one of those slippery terms in sociological discourse and one that need not be debated here, except in its relation to maintaining social bonds in face-to-face interactions. In its most basic sense, care can be understood in terms of its requirement in terms of self and others for human survival and reproduction. However, in this instance, care was delivered in a compassionate manner which **actually could** oppose the requirement of survival due to the possible dangers of excessive drug use, and also involved an element of risk, which initially played out to the detriment of the man giving his prescription medication away. Yet



the events described demonstrated a sense of caring for another in a way that strengthened bonds among a marginal social group through the fact that risk was **an** element of that caring gesture. As such, care in the form of a heroin substitute of sorts was given in a compassionate manner as a direct response to the immediate needs of somebody about to experience withdrawal. As an outcome of this previous gesture and a mistake made by the police, Martin's assistance was then called upon to negotiate the difficult situation the initial care giver found himself in. Blustein (1992: 145) referred to the fact that care has more pleasurable benefits than "mere self-interest"; whilst Martin clearly gained a sense of satisfaction helping others out and being recognised for this, it remains unknown as to the motivations of his friend.

Another tale of caring for another was narrated by Robert, when he described his interventions in the case of an elderly resident who was being victimised by young people. Robert described how he intervened to stand up for an elderly person living across the road from him:

I actually became a victim of crime myself through helping others. So basically, err, it all started, Margaret, God rest her, she's dead now, lived in the house opposite round the corner, 84 years of age, been in the land army, plagued by kids all the time, urinating through the letterbox, throwing things through the window. Fair play, she would come out and wave her walking stick, and then get a load of abuse. We wouldn't stand there, so we'd go across and help but then of course, the kids started picking on us then. For twelve months, I mean we had our windows smashed and our fence smashed because they would see the police come to our house every time we reported something happening at Betty's, the police would cross the road to our house which was opposite, and so we were squealers and you know what...I'm talking about it.

Care could be seen as a crucial structure for the relationships between self and others, and with regard to a sense of belonging to a social group, even as a “community within a community” (Redfield 1969). Regardless of the social identity of the individuals, care in these instances reflects the recognition of suffering and the desire to alleviate it, demonstrating that there is no *a priori* morality that is linked to caring for others.

## Discussion

“Differance as temporization, difference as spacing. How are they to be joined?” Derrida (2001: 284)

The data collected has demonstrated that community as a determinate concept has a fragile empirical nature, notwithstanding possessing a powerful imaginary and narrative quality. Time and memory are important factors in individuals’ perceptions of community; how long somebody has lived in Bryn Mawr affects their sense of belonging and attachment to others residing within the place. However, when established residents spoke of the past in relation to the community, it is characterised as a period reaching back into deep history, after which there was a sense of a rupture and change was sudden, as opposed to gradual. Appadurai (1996: 3) has drawn attention to this phenomenon of rupture in Western discourse:

One of the most problematic legacies of grand Western social science...is that it has steadily reinforced the sense of some single moment – call it the modern moment – that by its appearance creates a dramatic and unprecedented break between past and present. Reincarnated as the break between tradition and modernity, and typologized as the difference

between ostensibly traditional and modern societies, this view has been shown repeatedly to distort the meanings of change and the politics of pastness. Yet, the world in which we now live – in which modernity is decisively at large, irregularly self-conscious, and unevenly experienced – surely does involve a break with all sorts of pasts.

Younger people or relatively new residents were far more likely to both perceive ongoing changes and fleeting encounters in their surroundings and had little sense of a strong community. Young peoples' social bonds were likely to be tagged in terms of family, friendship and affiliations with sub-cultural groups rather than in relation to a sense of a wider all-encompassing community. The experiences of belonging to these groups will be discussed in detail in Chapter Six, as forms of performance and 'communitas'. Whilst more contemporary scholars such as Urry (2000) have emphasised the fluidity and mobility of communities in the postmodern world, Park was utilising the concept of "conflict" from plant ecology and applying it to different cultures in urban areas almost a century ago. Although Park's research centred upon a large city, some of his ideas are useful in understanding Bryn Mawr. In *Human Communities*, (1921) Park asserted that forces of social change including increasing urbanisation and immigration impacted upon the community which was originally socially well-organised. He saw the community as simultaneously dynamic, fluid, discordant and integrating:

The life of the community therefore involves a kind of metabolism. It is constantly assimilating new individuals, and just as steadily, by death or otherwise, eliminating older ones. But assimilation is not a simple process, and, above all else, takes time. Where growth is due to immigration, social change is of necessity more rapid and more profound... One of the incidents of the growth of the community is the social selection and segregation of the population, and the creation, on the one hand, of natural social groups, and on the other, of natural social areas. We have become aware of this process of segregation in the case of the immigrants... (Park 1926: 5-6)

Cohen (1985) also defined community as a group consciousness based upon contrasts or conflicts with other groups. When spatial boundaries break down due to the expansion of an area, symbolic boundaries are put in place to re-establish them. Although new estates have been built, and the geographical community of Bryn Mawr has expanded, symbolically the established or longer term members have placed symbolic boundaries in between us and them to maintain difference, as these estates primarily house 'incomers'. Similarly, all residents interviewed perceived the people living in the flats to be ephemeral. It was no surprise, then, to find that new residents or incomers, especially those housed in the flats or the more recently built estates, are more likely to accept strangers into their midst. However, smaller samples of data suggested that new incomers perceived the established community as equally strange and unnerving, which could result in self-imposed social isolation. Many of these perceptions came from rumours they had heard about the bad reputation of Bryn Mawr. Either way, the presence of the stranger in their reality can be articulated as "a symbol or an icon through which all manner of social and spatial tensions can be channelled. In the case of the social community, the tension between nearness and distance is something that may be lived rather than necessarily resolved." (Allen 2000: 58)

The concept of alterity is encountered in multiple forms in Bryn Mawr, and one that different social groups within Bryn Mawr find difficult to resolve. "The experience of alterity, in its raw form, is not an easy one. When we confront otherness we experience an array of emotions." (Hazell 2009: 98) Because othering is relational, it needs to be acknowledged and discussed from the perspective of different spaces. Further, it needs to be excavated to

determine what maintains areas of sameness and difference. What is clear is that we cannot talk about '*the* community' as an homogenous force; all we can do, is discuss a place of representation and how this has been fleshed out temporally, socially and in the imaginary. It should also be made clear that language contributes to the division and maintenance of separation in Bryn Mawr. The governance of the top-down approach to 'empowering communities' and 'making safe' involves the use of rhetorical devices which could arguably be said to perpetuate fragmentation. Key examples of these are based around essentialist binary discourses of exclusion/inclusion, and can be readily seen in the naming of various interventions such as social exclusion units and youth inclusion programmes; The concept of social exclusion implies that there is some homogenous underclass, the repository of much of the current portfolio of vices or deficits which contrasts with a relatively stable, virtuous majority of the included. (Young 2003: 393) Indeed the idea of the 'anti-social' itself is a binary concept. These are caught up in the Hegelian notion that difference must consist of two extremes. With regard to interventions within social groups labelled as communities, Deleuze's (2001: 190) comment should be considered; "We must therefore say that difference is made, or makes itself, as in the expression 'make the difference'." Rather than being dualistic, community can be understood as naturally internally plural, dialogical and polyphonic, and has had an assortment of different values and concepts attached to it. However, as a rhetorical tool, it remains a form of social control which although recognising the presence of groups of people attached to it, there is no expectation that the community actually exists. Irigaray (2001: 310) points out that;

We haven't been taught, nor allowed, to express multiplicity. To do that is to speak improperly. Of course, we might – we were supposed to? – exhibit one "truth" while sensing, withholding, muffling another. Truth's other side its complement? Its remainder? – stayed hidden. Secret. Inside

and outside, we were not supposed to be the same. That doesn't suit their desires. Veiling and unveiling: isn't that what interests them? What keeps them busy? Always repeating the same operation, every time.

Bryn Mawr is clearly not a homogenous community, nor is it 'inclusive' in any sense. It reveals itself as perhaps an attempt at simulacrum, in that interventions have been aimed at formulating a model of an ideal and politically imagined community; one that is prosperous and therefore supporting capitalism, low in crime and deviant behaviour and at least partially self-policing, and – most importantly, docile. Bryn Mawr evokes heterogeneous opinions regarding what it might mean to be a part of it, but for the purposes of attempts at coherent research, these narratives are continually being reworded. It also represents a place – and the importance of this will be explored in Chapter Seven. Bryn Mawr could be seen as a form of bricolage in a Derridean sense (Norris 1987) or an organic Deleuzian assemblage in that it has been created interactively through the diverse residents' participation, its specific local history - memory and event – and the wider historical constructions of communities nationally and globally. It represents – in Jock Young's words an "intense drive for ontological certainty" in what was a context of "anger fuelled by economic insecurity and deprivation." (2003: 391) Bryn Mawr could also be articulated as a passive outcome of the workings of state power, and a locus for social control. Hannah Arendt said; "Power corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together." (1970: 44) The structures of contemporary society are the result of an amalgamation of what Nietzsche calls a will to power, or what Sartre referred to as a "will to freedom" (1996: 62). Nancy has related this will to community and the possibilities it enshrines; "Absolute community – myth – is not so much

the total fusion of individuals, but the will of community: the desire to operate, through the power of myth, the communion that myth represents and that it represents as a communion or communication of wills.” (Nancy 1991: 57).

Additionally, as it was noted earlier that Derrida has said, communities are violent in their necessary processes of differentiation. This is common to all communities. To escape this violence, Derrida’s (2005) prescription is to cut the bond that binds or excludes one from a community, in order to experience the other, or a relation to the other, which will respect and do justice to their alterity. This relates to the concept of the interval as a threshold of becoming and of an ethical relation (Hill 2012). By this, one can perhaps fulfil what Sartre stated, in his defence of Existentialism as a humanism; “When we say that man chooses himself, we do mean that every one of us must choose himself; but by that we also mean that in choosing for himself he chooses for all men” (Sartre 1996). Irigaray’s suggestion for a starting point in developing a relation to the other is embedded in working with the first difference, that of sexuation; “Who or what the other is, I never know. But the other who is forever unknowable is the one who differs from me sexually. This feeling of surprise, astonishment, and wonder in the face of the unknowable ought to be returned to its locus: that of sexual difference.” (Irigaray 2001: 342) This being-with-one-another, initiated through the democracy that begins between two, foretells an opening for the community that has not yet been. Without democracy between two, the other is not ethically welcomed in their difference and instead attempts are made to integrate them into the existing order, denying a becoming for humanity. This becoming cannot be trusted to one subjectivity alone as this would be a totalitarian order involving one truth. Irigaray makes

this problem explicit; "And he feels himself to be more alone and naked when the other draws near to him, at least if he steps back so as to be capable of not assimilating the one who comes into his world. Making the one who arrives a simple inhabitant of his planet, a new being in his unchanged horizon, particularly his mental horizon, does not yet amount to welcoming the other. It is rather to reduce the other to the same." (Irigaray 2002: 77)

There looms, within abjection, one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate from an exorbitant outside or inside, ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable. It lies there, quite close, but it cannot be assimilated. It



beseches, worries, and fascinates desire, which, nevertheless, does not let itself be seduced.

(Kristeva 1982: 1)

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

# **Creating docile and abject bodies: power and the defining of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in Bryn Mawr**

## **Introduction**

In the previous chapter, an overview the multi-agency approach to tackling “crime and the causes of crime” under New Labour was provided, which included a brief discussion on the imagining of community safety. This drive towards institutionalising community safety has seen a number of teams appear across England and Wales which include managers, Policing and Community Support officers (PCSOs), project and youth workers, substance misuse organisations, and Women’s Aid workers; Bryn Mawr has been implicated in all these forms of governance and assistance in order to move towards deeper self-policing. As Cohen observed, the conflict between traditional community control as neighbourliness and community control as service delivery were different and perhaps incompatible, although “in practice, most projects find themselves trying both at once: using formal means (agencies, organisation, professions) to promote informal relationships, neighbourliness and reciprocal care.” (1985: 123) Although the partnership approach to governing through community at a local level has been criticised for producing a gap between policy and implementation (Stenson 2005), others have perceived it as a positive move in that it can provide local solutions to local problems.

This overall approach to crime control was adopted and implemented despite ongoing drops in crime levels in the UK prior to New Labour’s election win in 1997. Indeed, Squires and

Stephen (2005: 15) pointed out that regardless of ongoing falls in actual reported and recorded crime figures well into New Labour's second term, the public opinion was that crime levels were increasing, and New Labour had to be seen to be doing something about it and be on the side of the public (ibid: 14). This resulted in what Jock Young refers to as a process of "Defining Deviancy Up", as tolerance becomes less lenient (2011: 125). A key aspect of this was to identify and tackle what has become known as anti-social behaviour. This is not a new issue, with evidence of the categories of behaviours presently labelled as 'anti-social' – such as drunkenness in public, lack of respect, repeated petty offending - extending far back into history (Cohen 1972; Elias 1978).

However, the official discourse on anti-social behaviour was introduced in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, when Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) were initiated. These were further developed in the Home Office's (2003) White Paper *Respect and Responsibility – Taking a Stand Against Anti-Social Behaviour* and concretised in The Anti-Social Behaviour Act of 2004. Straight away, it was noted that there were no universalising definitions of anti-social behaviour, with the Home Office admitting to the subjective nature of the concept (2004: 3). Anti-social behaviour is a slanted and contextual term, which effectively embraces a wide range of so-called nuisance behaviours. Elizabeth Burney (2013) noted that The Joint Committee on Human Rights could not publish its report on the Anti-Social Behaviour Bill (which incidentally the House of Commons stage was completed by 22 May 2003) until 17 June which was nearly a month later, and the committee found that:

*...the term 'anti-social behaviour' without any definition to limit its meaning is an unacceptably vague term to use when authorising an*

*interference with a Convention Right. We do not think that people would be able to establish what it means by reference to any predictable, objective standards. (2013: 37)*

Further, Burney also famously stated that the White Paper had also acknowledged that the term could mean different things to different people:

*Anti-social behaviour means different things to different people – noisy neighbours who ruin the lives of those around them, ‘crack houses’ run by drug dealers, drunken ‘yobs’ taking over town centres, people begging by cash points, abandoned cars, litter and graffiti, young people using airguns to threaten or intimidate people or people using fireworks as weapons. (2013: 37)*

By the time I entered the field in order to carry out research, already much of the legislation had been utilised to tackle problems in Bryn Mawr, including the issuing of ASBOs and a dispersal order in 2006, the effects of which will be discussed in Chapter Seven. If we look at the legislation itself, we find that Anti-Social Behaviour encompasses many types of human behaviours from making a noise to illegal trading; Millie (2009) has pointed out that the term criminalises the comparatively trivial, yet also trivialises the serious criminal. New Labour ministers and supporters could theoretically apply the term 'anti-social behaviour' to a range of activities from transgression of legal codes to behaviours which some people might determine to be morally unacceptable, even though no actual harm has been caused to another human or protected positions and values, such as homelessness and gathering in a group. As New Labour was frequently identified with its ability to convincingly persuade through the employment of 'spin doctors' trained in the art of public relations and presentation, with a team of academics and researchers behind them, it was simple enough

to convince a largely uncritical public that anti-social behaviour was the second worst threat facing Britain next to terrorism.

To some extent, the effectiveness of governance through and with the perceived 'community' depends upon the collective peoples' willingness to engage in the process of social control in order to challenge anti-social behaviour. Obviously, where there are strong emotions involved, this can often be abused; for instance if one social group decides to demonise and persecute another, this becomes a particular concern in relation to anti-social behaviour, the definition of which is so subjective and open to manipulation. This includes the processes of observing and labelling the behaviours and reporting them. Bryn Mawr had various mechanisms in place to facilitate this official reporting in the structure of controls such as the County Council and Housing Association, Policing and Community Team, Policing and Community Safety Officers and further staff at the local police station. Due to the nature of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act, it was possible for a group of people to put a complaint in about an individual or group, and for that person or group to begin or extend the journey of criminalisation, even if their actions were relatively minor.

Innes and Jones (2006) have described two levels of control that could occur in this type of social context; formal social control and informal social control. These forms of control can be configured within Elias's earlier discussions on the civilizing process and his linkage between external and internal controls as "the social constraint towards self-constraint" (1994: 441-3). In other words, we try to control ourselves internally because generally

speaking, we fear external enforcement. Accordingly, there is a huge social pressure towards self-control; a pressure which many young people are ill equipped to deal with due to an overload of already existing pressures. Additionally, informal social control can be more insidious, discrete and diffuse, and Foucault (1998: 63) has drawn attention to this as a form of disciplinary power. Foucault's power "is everywhere" and "comes from everywhere"; it has neither agency nor structure and is consequently difficult to grab hold of as something tangible and comprehensible, despite its subtle inscriptions on both docile and resistant bodies. This kind of "capillary" power is in continual renegotiation, is fluid and pervasive, and is an everyday phenomenon that often remains invisible. Foucault (1977) explicitly differentiated this type of disciplinary power from a historical form of discipline which acted directly upon bodies, and he provided us with an account of the public torturing and killing of the condemned. He then described the coming of a new 'meta-power', which could be observed as forming in the institutions of the eighteenth century in Europe; mental hospitals, factories, schools and prisons. The systems of surveillance and the control of activities (ibid: 149) operating in such places no longer required the use of violence or direct force, but instead encouraged people to self-police, via a process of psychological internalization. Whilst much literature has been produced in criminology on the use of surveillance cameras and the control of public space through the gaze of the state (Farrington & Welsh 2006; Koskela 2000, 2003; Williams 2000), little has been produced regarding the more pervasive and reflexive forms of disciplinary power operating within and between smaller social groups such as the group of people living in the geographically defined area of Bryn Mawr. Although discourses on crime and anti-social behaviour can be understood as linked to ideas about impurity, defilement and danger, they remain abstract

ideas until they become lived experiences. Thus, when disciplinary power is intertwined with an embodied sense of abjection, it becomes distorted and rhizomatic (Deleuze and Guattari 1980), and its origins become lost; they can neither be firmly grounded in the lived body, nor located in the workings of power.

Influenced by Mary Douglas's (1966) work on purity, defilement and danger, Julia Kristeva (1982) wrote compellingly about abjection. According to Kristeva, abjection is the embodiment of horror caused a threatened breakdown in the division between subject and object or self and other. One of the main examples she gives of eliciting abjection is the human corpse (1982: 3), which obviously reminds us of our own mortality and evokes a sense of horror and repulsion. She also discusses excrement, urine, blood, open wounds, and for her personally, the skin that forms on warm milk (ibid: 2). Because the abject exists outside the symbolic order, coming face to face with it is traumatic. The repulsion we feel when faced with the abject is what produces and reproduces us as subjects in the symbolic order; the sense of the abject is a necessary undercurrent beneath an identity with dialectically jerks backwards and forwards from self to other, and is inescapable (Oliver 1998: 151).

Kristeva stated that whilst crime can generally be perceived as abject, it is usually crimes on a monumental scale such as Auschwitz which have the power to dissemble and disturb identity, the system and order (ibid: 4). Yet abjection underpins our entire perception of crime and that this is tied into how we imagine the criminal body as other, and that

reflexively, this is relentlessly reinforced by state policy and the control of criminalised bodies, even in relation to relatively low level crime such as public disorder and anti-social behaviour.

What needs to be done then, is to look at in some detail the interactions involved between formal and informal social controls in Bryn Mawr and the lived embodied experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour as abject or natural forces, bearing in mind Foucault's (1994: 132) assertion that power is created and reproduced through accepted forms of "knowledge" and "regimes of truth". In this respect, power can be seen as reflexively infusing life-worlds. Within these interactions, power might be employed in order to produce resistance to unquestioned and accepted social norms, social control and discourse; "if relations of power are dispersed and fragmented throughout the social field, so must resistance to power be." (Diamond & Quinby 1988: 185). Yet, at the same time and despite this, the power working through acts of resistance also helps prop up and reproduce the institutions that they defy; thus creating in choruses, both docile bodies and abject bodies.

### **Informal and formal social controls in Bryn Mawr**

There were conflicting feelings about becoming involved in confronting challenging behaviours in Bryn Mawr and this was coupled with diverse opinions as to what constituted



anti-social behaviour in the first place. Meurig, a Policing and Community Team member explained that the main reason people did not want to challenge anti-social behaviour was fear of retribution. He stated that the members of Policing and Community Team were there to represent people who “did not want to make any noise” themselves:

A lot of older people don't get out much and don't know the ins and outs of things. I have a business in the community and wanted to give something back. It is all well and good people moaning and groaning and not doing anything about it. I make my voice heard when I am at the PACT meetings and the officers up there are very approachable anyway.

However, younger and generally more confident people also avoided becoming involved in any way in reporting anti-social or threatening behaviours:

Claudine: Since you've lived here, have you ever been a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour?

Caroline: Yeah, I have. On the very first day I moved in, the T.V. licence man was knocking on peoples' doors and he knocked on my door, and I thought, wow, that's prompt! (laughs) and I gave him details and whatever, and it was fine. I was up and down the stairs with boxes and bags and stuff, and then downstairs, he knocked downstairs, and the guy downstairs offered to beat him up, and then he said “I don't live here, I am just looking after the property” and slammed the door in his face, and the TV licence guy was persistent and erm, and so the police were called and they asked me to be a witness, the residents, and I declined and said no, I didn't see anything.

It was felt by more established residents living in the vicinity of the main public park and shops that many of the more serious issues in Bryn Mawr had been raised and dealt with prior to the field work period. Even relatively new residents had heard about Bryn Mawr's historical issues of anti-social behaviour and crime, but had not found that their contemporary experiences necessarily matched what they had heard about in neighbourhood gossip. The historical problems of anti-social behaviour and vandalism prior

to 2007 had instigated a small collective to take action in the form of setting up a Neighbourhood Watch and placing pressure on the police and local agencies to take action.

Robert explained the history of this action and the resulting interventions:

I actually launched [the Neighbourhood Watch], yeah. I did research into Neighbourhood Watch and I had a word with some of the neighbours, and we launched that and then we started gaining evidence to get a dispersal order because we were getting gangs on the street. We managed to get CCTV cameras at the Co-op; they donated those because the kids were hanging outside the Co-op...And then going on the report from the PCSOs, when we had the dispersal order, they would take the kids back to their home, yeah? The parents were either in the pub, they were drunk, smoking, very stereotypical you know, unemployed, claiming benefits so then again, it probably comes back from the family environment. And eventually I stepped forward and lodged a complaint, [the main perpetrator] went to court, he was cautioned, and I've got to be honest, since then, the anti-social behaviour has decreased by 80%...and then we got the PCSOs, and erm, we worked closely with them...and we got to know who the trouble makers were, and then fair play, the last 12 months have been quite good. You'll obviously get anti-social behaviour. The window was smashed in the chippy last Saturday. You know, there's always going to be anti-social behaviour.

Robert described exactly what has become commonly known colloquially as the "Daily Mail View", and described verbatim the New Labour perspective that parental lifestyles of pub-going, alcohol drinking, cigarettes, unemployed and benefit claimants produce feral children; ideas which could also arguably have been excerpted from one of Winnicott's studies on childhood (1964; 1986). This conflicted with the reality which I observed; that some of the young people who I witnessed take part in preventive activities run by the Youth Offending Team, and who were considered at 'risk' of offending or who had been involved in petty crime such as theft, actually had parents who were working, including those in well-respected professions such as lecturers, surgeons and doctors. The only obviously defining difference between these young people was where their place of

residence and access to resources; in terms of behaviours, they engaged in similar practices. At the time Robert set up the Neighbourhood Watch, many residents did not feel that there was a serious problem in the area, and Robert admitted that the people in the Neighbourhood Watch felt frustrated that there was no working consensus of opinion, in that not everyone in Bryn Mawr felt that the behaviours they were witnessing were problematic:

The biggest thing I found was people kept saying “they’re not doing any harm”. But you try walking through a gang of twelve kids, whether they’re six years of age or sixteen, you’ve got to walk through and people were frightened to come out onto the streets...what really, really annoys us in the group is that everybody says there is nothing for the kids to do, and there’s loads for the kids to do, but there are some kids who just won’t go to a youth club, they don’t want to organise football, they just want to cause trouble...

Longer term residents had also described events to me that had happened in their childhoods, which would be labelled as anti-social behaviour in today’s terminology, but at the time, these occurrences were understood as children having fun; as one resident put it “We were the original Mawr Mob!” Such tales included staying out late at night, making fires out of rubbish in the street, playing games in groups, hanging out in groups by the woods or by the river and “doing dares”. Robert’s contemporary description continually referred to the internet and the media portrayals of anti-social behaviour and chavs, reflexively relating them to his own experiences.

During the first decade of the twenty first century, it could be argued that there was a ‘moral panic’ fuelled by the media in relation to anti-social behaviour and youth offending, a

panic which portrayed young people as 'folk devils'. Since Cohen first drew attention to the existence of 'folk devils' and 'moral panics' in 1972, and coined the terms to explain the exaggerated social reaction to the activities of various groups and individuals. This reaction was exaggerated in two ways; firstly in regard to the problem, and secondly in comparison with other problems:

A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible. (Cohen 1972: 1)

Moral panic is on the surface a simple and easily transferable thesis and Innes (2005: 108) has criticised its popular usage as being ignorant of the more complex aspects that were in Cohen's original work. More recently, there has been a renewed interest in the ideas, and scholars such as Rohloff and Wright (2010) have answered calls by to go beyond its usage as a 'heuristic' device. However, it is not my intention to explore these complex aspects in depth here, but rather point out that the combination of the media coverage in relation to anti-social behaviour (see, for example Marsh and Melville 2011 for numerous excerpts from the media relating to anti-social behaviour) and the policy developed under New Labour have reflexively influenced the responses of residents to what were effectively long existing behaviours within Bryn Mawr.

Tonry observed that the over-emphasis on anti-social behaviour has had a "perverse effect" (2004: 57), because what New Labour did effectively was make a relatively small problem

large by turning it into a policy issue and giving it “sustained high visibility attention...making people more aware of it and less satisfied with their lives and their government.” (Ibid.) Yet Pearson (1983) has argued that there is a substantial history of moral panics about youth and traces them back to the nineteenth century. He states that often these episodes tell us more about the society than the actual offending patterns of young people: “For generations Britain has been plagued by the same fears and problems as today; and this is something which should require us to reassess the shape of our present difficulties and the prospects for the future.” (Pearson 1983: ix)

Pearson also alluded to the fact that there has always been fear of a group of behaviours which has usually been yoked to young people, although there have been both continuities and changes within this association. These continuities and changes are dependent on other variables, such as media attention, shifts in methods of governance and the varying levels of social controls. Nonetheless, Foucault held that the purpose and efficacy of power/knowledge was pre-eminent over its ‘truth’, and that knowledge linked to power assumes the “authority of ‘the truth’” and accordingly has the capacity to “make itself true” (Hall 1997: 49). Moreover, knowledges about young people and their behaviours do not exist in a void; they are put into use via technologies and “strategies of application” in different socio-historical contexts and “regimes” (ibid.). Applying these knowledges about young people leads to the production and reproduction of ‘regimes of truth’. This is despite the fact that “in some absolute sense it has never been conclusively proven.” (Ibid.) These ‘regimes of truth’ consequently become and remain dominant in perpetuating discourses.

Different age groups can be perceived and imagined as abject in relation to their bodies and the ways in which policy negotiates age as related to social status. Bodies which disrupt notions of fixed identity can be understood as abject, and adolescent bodies can be understood as existing in a state of transience and ambiguity, as they are neither child nor adult and outside of what civilization considers social beings or productive citizens. As Western society generally lacks any formal rite of passage into adulthood, adolescents hover in an in-between state often from the age of eleven until they are eighteen and formally recognised in terms of age, as an adult.

Continuing to discuss young people in Bryn Mawr using the terminology of anti-social behaviour fuels the embodied stereotype of abjection, and young people are becoming increasingly criminalised as a result. Groups of youths hanging out together in public places often end up labelled negatively as 'gangs', as can be seen in Robert's description above, which can also result in discriminatory practices against children on the fringes of such groups, or those whose older siblings are involved. This can result in the lives and individual lived realities of these children and young people being reduced to a universalising narrative; as seen in Robert's narrative "whether they're six or sixteen". Ralphs *et al.* have made this explicit through their research on gangs in an English city. They pointed out that young people with any social connections – through family, school or even those who lived close to others known to the police to be in gangs - would be considered as "at risk" or "gang associated" and subjected to the same surveillance and interventions, irrespective of the fact that they might not be involved in order to attempt to guarantee docility. (2009: 496) Even from young peoples' perspectives, it is difficult to ascertain exactly which children

and young people form part of a group of offenders, and which ones do not, due to the propensity of young people to claim allegiance to an offending group, in order to look 'cool', gain credibility on the street or demonstrate shared values and identities. The reality might be different, and young people might affiliate themselves with different groups at different times. This became clear as I observed that friendship groups shifted within and between the estates in Bryn Mawr (see also Young *et al.* 2007).

Certainly, children and young people in Bryn Mawr who were associated with known offenders or others engaging in anti-social behaviours, were considered at risk of offending. The Youth Offending Service's Youth Intervention Programme and the preventative activities project directly targeted children and young people living in a particular part of Bryn Mawr that was historically associated with anti-social behaviour and crime, with the laudable intention of keeping them out of trouble and away from potentially criminogenic situations. Together with a youth worker from Communities First, they also attempted to recruit young people into their activities programmes who knew existing attendees, considering them possibly at risk of offending behaviours by association. Edwards and Hughes (2008) pointed out that the primary concern of Community Safety Partnerships has been on reducing crime and disorder. They observed that superficially, this would appear that they engage in crime control rather than social policy, although when looked at empirically, much control work is preventive as opposed to repressive and focused on enforcement. Furthermore, the idea of safety was primarily created to protect the interests of those who complied with appropriate behaviour norms; this meant that safety has never been prioritised in terms of individual young people, especially as there were sometimes

underlying reasons as to why they preferred to be outside the home late at night; these ranged from boredom to more worrying issues such as the stress of having to conceal emotions, hatred of siblings, avoiding “angry fathers”, or wanting to get high to block out unwanted feelings. Indeed, youth workers were aware that many of the young people involved in the project had mental health issues or emotional problems. Young people themselves referred to these in a number of contexts as “anger issues”, “self-harming” and “fighting”. Indeed, the Youth Offending Team workers referred to the group of young people in the preventative project as “a sort of therapy group.” Additionally, when I was out with Anthony picking up children for the preventive project from the estates, I gained a glimpse into the homes of the young people that I was spending time with. As most of the work was carried out in public space, it was unusual to see into their domestic spaces and life worlds. The following excerpts from field notes provide examples of these instances:

Fieldnote, January, 2011:

The minibus stopped up at Maes Blodau before moving on to the other estates. Leo’s mother answered the door, holding a toddler. I was hoping to get her to sign a consent form, as Leo wanted to take part in my study. She was very young and pretty and was wearing a strappy vest top, and I noticed that her arms were etched with scars. I had to force myself to look away because I found myself staring at her arms whilst I was talking to her. I was quite shocked by the evidence of what was obvious and serious self-harming, and wondered if Leo had to witness that.

Fieldnote, April, 2010:

Lucas couldn’t come to the project. I knocked on his door and he answered it with a real shiner of a black eye. He looked dejected and his energy was low. His mother got to the door immediately after him. She seemed flustered and was desperate to tell me about his eye. Apparently he had hit his head by falling on the toilet when he was tired late at night



and had acquired a black eye. I wasn't convinced and notified the YOT worker.

Given Bryn Mawr's history prior to 2007, there was a drive towards preventing another outbreak of organised anti-social behaviour which during the fieldwork period, had begun to involve a youth worker from Communities First, who quickly developed extensive knowledge of the different groups within different estates and who the young people were. Yet the more subtle approaches to the prevention of offending did not get past everyone. One young person, Jez, was invited to attend woodland skills and woodworking events put on at weekends as part of the Youth Offending Team's preventative project because he associated with other young people on the project and lived on a street notorious at that time for anti-social behaviour, and on which there lived at least one young person who was the subject of an Anti-Social Behaviour Order. Although Jez attended several sessions, his mother informed me that she was very annoyed when she found out that her son had been part of an intervention aimed at preventing youth offending:

If I had known what that group was all about, I wouldn't have let him go. I really thought it was just a fun thing for him to do; I had no idea that he would be mixing with criminals. From now on, he goes to Sea Cadets.  
(Anna)

By removing Jez from the group of consisting of children understood as wild and definitely 'undesirable' as potential friends, Anna was able to reflect on the nature of power, in that she simultaneously resisted external imposition of power through direct and indirect governance, and also rejected the possibility of her son being labelled as deviant by association, through her own form of 'governance' as a parent. This scenario was an

example of the heterogeneous, kaleidoscopic and nodal effects of power operating through and within Bryn Mawr. Here, institutional power instead flowed in a “capillary movement” through her individual choice, her son’s life path, his associations with and through the bodies and behaviours of others and local power relations. As suggested by Foucault’s work, power does shift and move around by transference via knowledge and contesting views between different individuals and groups in different moments.

### **Attitudes to forms of formal control**

During periods of participant observation, I was able to ascertain attitudes towards the police and local agencies amongst the young people residing in Bryn Mawr. Young people swamped me with complementary remarks regarding the key youth workers on the preventive activities project, describing them variously as “legends”, “cool”, “amazing” and “good role models”. During activities and away from parents and the disciplinary power of the school, the young people said that they could “be themselves”, and that the key workers helped them “to come out of themselves because usually we have to hide it all”. Youth workers were consequently understood more as caring, trusted friends than as discrete agents of disciplinary power. This would suggest that these role models are lacking in any sense of community in the area. Cohen (1985: 123) made a valid point regarding the contrast between the reaching out of the bureaucratically welfare state to assist those in need and the cultivation of neighbourliness and “effective informal caring activities within neighbourhoods by local residents themselves.” He stated that the reality is that projects are caught up in “policy double-binds” (ibid.) and end up trying to do both; using formal

means to promote informal relationships. The difficulty is of course, that whilst this may work in some contexts in the general sense of caring-for-others, it is difficult to implement any kind of neighbourhood led care for young people at risk of offending due to an inherent lack of trust.

As one might expect, there were young people who disliked the police who were more obvious and visible agents of social control, yet many of the young people involved in the preventative activities project developed positive relationships with them, especially females. The excerpt from a field note, written after spending some time on the streets with Youth Offending Team workers demonstrated the discrepancy in willingness to communicate with police officers between males and females.

Fieldnote, April, 2010:

The girls got really excited when the PCSO and PC Carol turned up. They ran up to Carol, and she got loads of hugs from the girls, who commented enthusiastically on her hair colour. She made a joke of it and said it was to cover up all the grey hairs and showed them her roots. The girls nicked the PCSOs cap when he said he might dye his hair, pointing out that he didn't actually have much hair. There was a lot of laughter and it was all very good-humoured and there was a feeling of trust. The boys seemed quite wary and kept their distance.

During time spent as a volunteer on the preventative activities project, young males around the ages of fourteen and fifteen were openly hostile regarding the police and referred to them in derogatory terms, except for the female PC who worked closely with the Youth Offending Services and who often turned up to join in. It appeared on the surface that female police officers were more acceptable to the boys than male ones, or perhaps it was

because they had got to know her. Data collected from interviews also suggested that girls were happy with a police presence in Bryn Mawr, whilst boys who were directly involved in anti-social behaviour were not:

Claudine: Do you think the people here like the police? Younger people?

Sarah: No! Because once, I was walking and I saw these, like 15 year old lads throwing eggs at a police car and they got chased by a policeman, so I don't think they like the police....

Claudine: How do you feel about the police, do you think that they are good at their job?

Sarah: Yeah! I think they do really well, I have got no problem with them roaming around...

There were obviously going to be mixed feelings about the police and formal controls within Bryn Mawr, and the conflicting ideas played out through the data collected via interviews. In general, Meurig as a member of the Policing and Community Team was impressed with the interventions that had taken place to prevent further anti-social behaviour:

Since they have had the two PCSOs and the lead officer, there has been a significant drop in anti-social behaviour in the last two years. If you went back three years ago, it was quite horrendous in the evenings for the people living round this area. Large groups of youths congregating. They'd go into the shops and the Co-op and then head into the park and be a nuisance there into the early hours of the mornings during the summer months. Before the formation of the PACT, it had been going on about two years or so.

However, when his own property was vandalised, he was disappointed that the perpetrator, who was arrested and apparently had a string of convictions already, was never prosecuted. Likewise, Andy was fairly relaxed about the ongoing noise and vandalism on his estate until he was personally targeted and his property was damaged:

On New Year's Day evening, the Mawr Mob, well three of them, it had been snowing...so there was loads of snow about, and they were throwing snow at about five houses in the street, and as it continued, they started banging on our windows and we had our curtains shut...and banging on the door, and they broke the lock on the front door because they were kicking it and stuff like that...but erm, we didn't actually call 999, but we called the police station and said it was happening, but they kept it up for about five or six hours...but in the end, the police came up on foot, about three of them, because they thought the police car would come up the road, and the police arrested them. So they did actually get arrested, but that was after five hours and because they had complaints from about six houses in the street.

Surprisingly, despite Mark presenting as being quite relaxed about anti-social behaviour on the estate, and admitting that he had a youth project worker to keep him out of trouble when he was young, he stated that he believed that the police and the Housing Association needed to be "more strict" with people engaging in anti-social behaviour. He suggested what he called a "three strike system". He also stated that there needed to be more for teenagers to do, believing from his own experience that they were causing trouble because they were bored. Further, he suggested that more than one place was needed for the young people to go to, because "there are so many large estates and the place is so fragmented".

### **The Mawr Mob: myth or reality?**

As the fieldwork continued, a common name kept cropping up. This was the name of a local 'gang', known as the Mawr Mob. Often, when people heard I was interested in crime and anti-social behaviour, they were keen to tell me all about them. As I heard so many conflicting perceptions of this 'gang', I was not entirely sure whether the gang existed or whether it was some sort of phantasmic entity, created to bully or threaten others. The

young people attending the Youth Offending Team preventive activities programme frequently referred to them in the same terms Robert had – as a “chav gang”. The young people described them in great detail, even down to what hairstyles and types of earrings the girls associated with them wore and the music they listened to. They were associated with anti-social behaviour and tried to be like gangsters in their mannerisms and fashion style, which consisted of “trackies and hoodies, worn up”. The girls tried to look like celebrities, and were labelled as “chav slags”. So I began to ask people specifically about it during interviews. Many of the young people concluded that they were a historical group, and wanted to impose their own contemporary groups over any memory of the Mawr Mob. Gemma informed me that the gang itself had broken up and that now there were different groups:

The Mawr Mob aren't here anymore, everyone has their own group. We know one gang...they smoke, they go up the street, or go up the hill... Chavs just walk the streets of Bryn Mawr. They do like to mess about, shout and stuff. On Halloween, they egg houses and egg people on the streets. We haven't egged houses, but we have egged each other, one of the chavs threw an egg at Dylan's head. There were chavs, and then there were adults too, they had a van and it was like, full of eggs. They were like 18 at least. They get loads of eggs and just chuck them at people. They have a massive egg contest, there's like two teams. And then they all leg it round Bryn Mawr, and they egg houses and they egg each other.

Meurig, a local businessman and member of the Policing and Community Team also stated that the main problems associated with anti-social behaviour and crime historically in Bryn Mawr were down to a chav gang known as the Mawr Mob:

You've probably seen graffiti relating to this group. But in the last eighteen months, you don't hear any mention whatsoever, you don't see any graffiti relating to this anywhere, not that I have noticed anyway, put it

that way. In the past, the living accommodation which is on the side here, had a smashed window one night, there were eggs thrown at the building; that is going back a few years ago. One morning when we came here there was red liquid thrown all over the door, whether it was Ribena or red wine or something, it was deliberately thrown, you could tell. With the smashed window, nothing came of it, the individual was apprehended, a string of other offences, and they just got a slap on the wrist, so you know...the person was about 14 or 15 at the time, and he was known to the police, he was quite a troublemaker, he had been taken home by the police on a number of occasions for being out after midnight. He was from a broken home, certainly had a big effect on him.

In contrast with Meurig's view that there are no more gangs in Bryn Mawr doing graffiti,

Natalie stated that she didn't like living there for the following reasons:

There's loads of gangs...they take over the park, little kids can't go on anything, they'd start arguments and fights and stuff. Lots of old people find them threatening. Sometimes you can hear them shouting at them, 'cause they're always doing knock door run, and they get scared and call the police...

There were different views as to whether the Mawr Mob had dissolved permanently or whether it would be revived by another generation of young people. Meurig's view was that they had grown up and that problems were unlikely to recur as the Policing and Community Team were prepared for further bouts of anti-social behaviour.

My perception of it is that this gang has grown up now, they've probably got cars and they're probably the young offenders speeding now late at night through the town centre and various other localities. They've just grown out of the street anti-social behaviour. They were probably 13 to 17 perhaps with perhaps one or two older members tagging along. Measures are being put in place to stop this kind of behaviour escalating.

Robert believed that the problems had already started again, suggesting that one group grows out of it and then another group of younger adolescents takes over. This would

suggest that the behaviours are temporary and restricted to a particular age group; when adolescents reach eighteen, it would appear that most of them stop engaging in anti-social behaviour.

I think it has changed because as they get older, they move on and then somebody will take over. And it starts up again. In fact, we've had a meeting a few weeks ago. We had a gang of about 15 of them about 2 weeks ago and we had to call the police. Someone seems to take the lead, once the gangs disappear, someone else obviously steps in to their shoes, so erm, that's started again.

Stuart, a youth worker with the Youth Offending Team explained that when he began working in the area, there was quite a big emphasis on the Mawr Mob.

[They were seen as] this gang of monsters that go round trashing the place – which actually stemmed from the Bryn Mawr Youth Club, the original Bryn Mawr Youth Club. Which, when you look at it, it was a group of kids looking for something to do. In the grand scheme of things, they are the social group that typifies Bryn Mawr, and have done for about five years, and that's quite scary because there are a lot of other cultures and identities within Bryn Mawr that are easily missed by general assumptions.

Some young people were certainly frightened of the Mawr Mob, but when one scratched under the surface, some of what was widely accepted as 'truth' revealed itself as hearsay:

Sarah: There's this group called the Mawr Mob. They're this massive group. A mixture from fourteen to like, twenty years of age, and they're just a big bunch of like, really rough people and you really don't want to get involved with them...because they will be the kind of ones who will, say if you hang out with us we'll buy you sweets and stuff...but then they'll get you into drug dealing...and stealing alcohol...and all that kinda stuff...

Claudine: so how did you find out about the Mawr Mob then?

Sarah: well, at first I didn't have a clue who they were and then...Erin told me cause I went to the park..with Erin and Katie the other day and erm...it was at about 5 o'clock so it was getting dark and we saw like two



members of the Mawr Mob walk by and (friend name) was like, “Oh no, it’s the Mawr Mob” so I was like “What’s that?” and they said it’s like the biggest rough group in Bryn Mawr, and I was like ooooooh! And then she told me some more stuff about them like they’ll hang out at like ten o’clock at night and they’ll just ...they’ve mugged people before, they’ve mugged old ladies, they’re horrible, not very nice....

Similarly, Jess was keen to tell me about the people who “go round carrying knives”, but when pushed for more information, revealed that it was only something that she had been told.

Jess: I don’t think they have stabbed anyone yet but they do it because they think they’re cool

Claudine: What sort of knives are they carrying?

Jess: I have no idea

Claudine: Have you ever seen them, or just heard about them?

Jess: Well, my friends saw them...

The Mawr Mob were clearly real groups of young people, and the collective can be dated back to the 1980s, if not before. Older residents claimed to have been part of it, describing taking part in events that today, would almost certainly be described as anti-social. Yet they also claimed a very strong sense of group identity and a strong feeling of belonging to place. Whilst the main group operating in the first decade of the twenty first century was broken up in the years 2006-7 and mostly, the young people either grew out of their behaviours moved on, there seem to be new groups forming. However, it would also appear that there are still a remaining few members of the group that was subject to the dispersal order, who are occasionally seen out.

## Habitus, and 'natural attitudes' to anti-social behaviour

In everyday life, people see other people, objects and ideas as real and factual, and do not question their existence. People look out onto the street and see other people, other homes, cars and roads and have a 'natural attitude' towards them. (Husserl 1982: 5) This refers to a sense of being-in-the-world in the domain of everyday life; that of 'facticity' or situatedness.

In sociology, Bordieu and de Certeau's 'practice theories' are often made use of alongside phenomenological theories (see Moore 1999: 4). However, Bordieu's ambiguous relationship with phenomenology continues to be debated and problematized by scholars today. Although Bordieu himself insisted that the turn to the *doxic* had "nothing to do with the phenomenological recovery of the lived experience of practice." (1972: 156), it has been argued that he was nonetheless strongly influenced by phenomenologists, particularly Husserl and Merleau-Ponty. Moran (2011) has stated that "Habit is a key concept in Husserl's genetic phenomenology" and that Husserl explored this by using a variety of terms such as: *Habitus*, *Habitualität*, *Gewohnheit*, *das Habituelle*, *Habe*, *Besitz*, *Sitte*, *Tradition*, which illustrated the intricacy and profundity of the phenomenological handling of 'habit'. Bourdieu criticized Husserl for locating *habitus* within the sphere of conscious subjectivity and for failing to provide 'habit' with a practical knowledge. (Moran 2011). Bourdieu (1977), in asserting himself as a sociologist, argued that phenomenology offers at best a 'complicitous description' of the life-world; in other words whilst describing features at the surface, it fails to reveal underlying structures and forces. Lau argues that Bordieu was directly opposed to phenomenological social constructivism, only making use of several

concepts and that he does not marry it to structuralism at all, although this seems unlikely when reading Bordieu's work on the Kabyle House. There is also some argument as to whether the concept of *habitus* is reductionist or not, with Lau arguing that it is a non-reductionist concept (2004: 370). Robbins (2010: 171) states that "Bordieu exploited phenomenology while rejecting its transcendental pretensions. In effect, phenomenological reduction was for Bordieu a heuristic device *within* the natural attitude that owed its pragmatic results to claims of transcendence that he did not accept." Robbins (2010: 170) also points out that although Bordieu's indebtedness to phenomenology was renounced in 1945 as a strategy to promote himself as a sociologist, in 1942, the influence of Merleau-Ponty's *La Structure de Comportement* was obviously reworked in Bordieu's *Celibat et condition paysanne*, especially in relation to the concepts of *habitus* and *hexis*.

It could also be argued that although Bordieu admitted to taking ideas from phenomenology before he asserted his rejection of phenomenology, he did not take enough from it; for instance, Atkinson (2010) suggests that a particularly Schutzian phenomenology could enrich Bordieu's work. Moran however draws attention to the likelihood that Husserl was previously theorising the *habitus* as an aspect of the lifeworld as he explicated "the relationship between normality and abnormality as the experience of the 'homeworld' (*Heimwelt*) or 'nearworld' (*Nahwelt*) versus the 'alienworld' (*Fremdwelt*). Communal life, language, and so on is lived according to the familiar habits and traditions shared by a community or culture ('homeworld'). Moreover, the different senses of normality can be interwoven and have an interrelatedness."

As this thesis argues for the combining of phenomenology and social constructivism whilst refusing to ignore the mobilisation of power, it is easy to sympathise with some of Bordieu's views regarding the ineffectiveness of pure phenomenology as applied to sociology. However, the connection between the phenomenological habits and lifeworld and Bordieu's concepts of *doxa* and *habitus* are too close to ignore, especially as Bordieu centralises the body as a theme, as Merleau-Ponty prescribed in his phenomenology. Whilst Bordieu's *doxa* denotes what is taken for granted in a social group, *habitus* is an explanation for the habits that people possess, including physical, behavioural, mental or emotional. Some of these are just there below the conscious level and allow the individual to operate at an instinctive or ad-lib level in everyday life as situations present themselves. (Bordieu and Wacquant 1992) This is referred to as 'praxis' or practice (Bordieu 1977). These habitual modes of practice are learnt from childhood experiences, and as life progresses, these habits become more embedded in an individual's reality, culminating in a 'feel for the game' (Bordieu and Wacquant 1992: 128). Further, *habitus* is mnemonic and embodied and is consequently phenomenologically discernible in social interactions (Jenkins 2002: 76).

Social structures and blueprints for behaviour are also inherent in *habitus*, and are replicated through praxis in the forms of embodiment, thought and language and can be used to reproduce "conditions of oppression" (Bordieu 2000: 217) Bordieu refers to this as "symbolic violence", which operates in a similar vein to Foucault's formulation of disciplinary power, described earlier. Bordieu situates symbolic violence as deeply rooted in our social structures, and when scrutinised, it reveals inequality at the core of society. His concept of *doxa* directly relates to the internalization of structures which are experienced as

normal and familiar ways of experiencing the world, and inequality is fundamental to these structures (1990: 20). The symbolic violence is consequently exercised wherever there is generic complicity, as so few individuals reject the structures of inequality at the unconscious level as well as the conscious – for instance in terms of the language they use.

Following a previous point made regarding the long history of childhood and young peoples' behaviours in Bryn Mawr and bearing in mind that in some parts of Bryn Mawr, particularly those areas that have had frequent local authority and agency interventions in order to prevent offending, it could be argued that there is a 'natural attitude' to anti-social behaviour amongst some of the residents. This means that in some streets, it was rarely questioned or reflected upon until it directly affected an individual resident due to the cumulative exposure over time. This 'natural attitude' became more embedded the more one accepted events on an estate as normal, and as they became part of the habitus. Andy, a father of two children casually stated:

Some of the older kids swear at you and stuff if you're walking past, at weekends and holidays, they're always out until ten, eleven, twelve o'clock at night, and you know, mucking about with the bins, vandalising stuff and things like that, but I mean, generally they're OK...our kids come in at eight or nine o'clock, and then they're only in the street on their skateboard and stuff. (Andy)

When we first moved in you'd get kids knocking on doors and running off, you know, normal stuff. What we used to do when we were younger. It has calmed down now. It is all boredom and bad parenting. Some parents should be better educated. When you see a group of them, just standing around doing nothing, so your brain starts wondering what are they up to? There's normally a group of eight of them. About eleven to fourteen. I've seen them smoking. When they get to fourteen they start experimenting with drink. (Mark)

I had to go out and tell that Dean off the other day. He was trying to start a fire in a plastic cup, right next to my fence! (Sharon)

For Heidegger, the daily lived environment is “ready to hand” and that our average way of being-in-the-world means that Dasein is lost within the being of the Others, through complicity. This results in the self being unable to achieve full self-awareness:

Being-with-one-another dissolves one's own Dasein completely into the kind of Being of 'the Others', in such a way, indeed, that the Others, as distinguishable and explicit, vanish more and more...The Self of everyday Dasein is the they-self, which we distinguish from authentic Self – that is, from the Self which has been taken hold of in its own way. (Heidegger 1962: 164, 167)

Young people also had a generally relaxed attitude when describing their participation in what could be labelled as anti-social behaviours on their estates. Their lifeworld in Bryn Mawr intersected with the lifeworld of school, and the space travelled between. As such, many young people spent much of their day in the company of the same others. The less time they spent at home, the more time was spent in these social groups, so a culture of complicity developed. During a drama session put on by the Youth Offending Service's preventive activities project, we were able to direct a fun activity in which young people were encouraged to talk about and act out some of the types of people living in their neighbourhoods in order to gain an idea as to their opinions of different social groups and what types of activities they did. Many young people enacted the roles of 'chavs', 'emos', 'druggies' and 'slags', and talked confidently about their visual and behavioural characteristics after the role-play. This is a significant point, as Mead argued that as our capacity for reflecting on ourselves is derived from interactions and from incorporating the

attitudes and roles of others as children through role-play. (Mead 1962 [1934]: 151)

Sutherland developed a similar idea in relation to criminality in his theory of differential association, which simply put; claims that people are exposed to a variety of individuals, from whom they learn. In other words, they choose to incorporate certain behaviours over others (Gaylord & Galliher 1994). Sutherland believed that if an individual is exposed to a higher proportion of deviants, it is then more likely that they too, will become deviant. Of course, even if one would want to, it is impossible to quantify the levels of exposure these days with social networking and other insidious forms of media penetrating the psyches of individuals on a daily basis. However, it can be claimed with certainty that individuals always naturally embody others in a fluid process of intercorporeality, in that as others are enacted they become parts of praxis, and are integrated into the habitus.

It could be argued then, that certain behaviours seen as desirable became incorporated in the absence of significant contradictory ones as 'natural attitudes', as part of the lived habitus of the estates. For instance, during preventative activities project, I was informed by young people from the ages of ten to fifteen that they stayed out on the streets until very late, even on school nights. Staying out late was considered to be a key aspect of fitting into the groups and maintaining credibility, and was therefore an issue that was prone to exaggerations. However, it seemed that it was not uncommon for the young people and children to be playing on the streets or in the parks until midnight, and parents confirmed that children as young as nine were playing out until after midnight. Being allowed to stay out so late was considered to be a desirable and sought after concession:

Chavs have usually got parents who give in. I know two people and their parents let them have camp outs and sleep-overs and they know they smoke [weed] and that, and they let them stay out 'til like one. (Natalie)

Gemma also stated in a later interview, that if she could live anywhere, it would be with her friend Kaylie because her mother let her stay out late, have sleep-overs whenever she wanted and let her go on 'camp outs' in groups. Often, young people would just hang about on the streets, go to the park or 'up the woods' or go to each other's houses until late at night. Sometimes, they would climb the hill behind the estates and roll down it for fun or push each other around in trolleys taken from outside the supermarket. After school, they would walk to Morrisons supermarket and hang around outside, smoking and having fun with their friends. Their reasons for staying out late are varied; several specifically stated that they didn't like being at home, either because it was boring, they didn't want to do their homework on an evening, or because they did not get on with a parent.

The latest I have stayed out 'til is 2am, on the streets. We just mess around, I don't want to stay at home with my Mum...it's boring at home...you just sit and watch TV, but when you're outside you can play and stuff and mess around. On a school night, my mum lets me stay out 'til 11. I don't see many girls walking about, it is mostly boys. I got drunk on New Year cause my Mum let me, and on my birthday, but her [Gemma's] Dad was there and she took it too far. I was just hyper, but she started puking. She was singing stuff that was quite bad. (Natalie)

Young people told me regularly throughout the field work period that there is a culture of underage drinking in Bryn Mawr. Meurig had given me the details regarding how the two local shops had placed tighter restrictions on the purchasing of alcohol, as previously, children had sent older siblings or friends into the shops to purchase alcohol for them.



However, young people informed me that this was still happening, and that they could still acquire alcohol via older peers. Likewise, if they wanted cigarettes and cannabis, there was always someone who was willing to get it for them. Most young people had a 'natural attitude' to the smoking of cannabis, most commonly referred to as 'weed', and did not consider it to be a drug, but rather something that was "a bit naughty". Additionally, they inferred that some parents might turn a blind eye to the drinking of alcohol, or casual or 'experimental' drug use:

Jess: Some of [my friends] smoke, drink, and they don't take drugs but they smoke weed though...well, it is sort of drugs, but it's not like crack or anything.

Claudine: So the worst thing they do is smoke a bit of weed then?

Jess: Yes

Claudine: And have a bit of alcohol?

Jess: Yes

Claudine: Okay...so when you go to each other's houses, does that happen a lot?

Jess: They smoke, but listen to music and play guitar and stuff.

Claudine: How do their families feel about that?

Jess: Dunno, we just hang out in their room...so they don't really notice.

Groups of young people pooled resources in the form of small amounts of cash they had, in order to 'club together' to buy a packet of cigarettes, some alcohol or some cannabis. A number of young people informed me of a household where they could go and buy 'dodgy backy' (which in this instance meant contraband rolling tobacco), alcohol and other substances. Occasionally, it was also possible to buy single cigarettes from older young

people. However, many young people who were participants in this study did not feel that there was anything wrong with this, and older young people, such as Mike and Lucy understood it as normal that fourteen year olds would experiment with cigarettes, alcohol and recreational drugs.

### **Casual violence and intimate partner abuse**

When asked about intimate partner abuse and violence, people generally seemed surprised that it might be happening in houses on their estates. I was aware that it was a frequent occurrence, as two doctors operating in the area had informed me in an interview that domestic abuse was common across all age groups in Bryn Mawr. Most participants in my study made vague noises about not really knowing whether it happened or not. Whilst casual violence carried out in public spaces was acknowledged as real, violence and abuse in the private space of the home was not often acknowledged nor reported, despite the fact that many people interviewed lived in close proximity to others. This reflects the tension between private and public space, which will be discussed further in Chapter Seven. Occasionally, I would be informed that police had turned up to someone's house and that there was a lot of shouting, but there was doubt as to the reason, as there were also known to be drug raids. Worryingly, young females seemed to be unclear as to what constituted intimate partner abuse and violence. The most alarming account of domestic abuse was given by Gemma, in a more general statement about events she had heard about:

I know people who have nicked stuff from a shop, getting drunk and making mayhem, someone smashed our neighbour's window and made a massive hole in it. I used to have people living next to me and they took drugs, my sister used to go over there to play with their little girl and son, and once they got drunk and came back, and my Mum's friend, the little girl's Mum and her boyfriend, and they had sex, and my sister and [] and [] were watching and they told my Mum and she stopped them from going round there. They've had their window smashed from her boyfriend, the police came and asked us what we saw and stuff...there's always loads of arguing and smashing stuff, the girlfriend lives there and she was like arguing with her boyfriend and she used to cry and stuff, but I don't know what happened but she used to cry and walk out and he'd shout at her. I think the people who used to live next to me were the worst that I have seen. I hated them because her baby had a fit and she brought him to our house and she said I'm never seeing him again because I want to protect my baby and stuff but it didn't last long.

However, Gemma was not alone in her experience, as Sarah had a similar account relating to a resident in the flats. It is possible that Sarah didn't understand what was happening, but nonetheless, she did not appear shocked in any way at the manner in which the mother was abusing her child emotionally. Instead, she understood the noise as an irritating inconvenience:

On the first floor, there's this woman, about 24, and she has 2 young babies, and erm, well, one is about 4 and one is about 2, and she has quite bad anger issues, I don't think she should even be allowed to have the children...because you can hear everything they do, they're very loud....and the little four year old, we heard him..smash something, I am guessing a glass or something...and the woman, really loud, "Oh my god, you effer!" and all you could hear all night was the baby crying and her shouting at him, so that was really annoying....

Frequently, participants would tell me about fights within or about family relationships or romantic relationships, notably among young people. During the activity with the Youth Offending Team, young people were also asked what types of people they considered 'bad' and why.

Field note, October 2011:

The minibus was late so we didn't get going for ages. Everyone split up into groups and then had to role play an unpleasant situation that had actually happened. Most of the young people enacted events that had happened at school, with the more domineering ones deciding on the story to be told in each group. One of the scripts I heard described how a girl had been calling Lily's sister a 'spak' and her brother a 'fish' so Lily told her to "go fuck herself". The girl then she came back with loads of chavs, and then the "stupid fat bitch of a teacher" came up. So Lily told her to "do one". Lily complained that the girl had dobbed her in, the "stupid little bitch." Tracey then said to that stupid bitch that Lily was gonna give her a slap. All the scripts involved conflict of some sort. Afterwards I had a chat with some of the young people about violence. Most of the girls told me that other girls were really bad "when they steal your boyfriend." They stated that there was a lot of falling out between girls, but that they tried to avoid conflict with the boys. I was informed that if you are seen hanging around with one boy in particular, all the girls will get jealous and have a go at you. One of the girls was friends with him, but all the other girls had a go at her and accused her of liking him in a romantic way, so she doesn't hang out with him anymore.

Another female participant casually informed me how she had got into an argument with another girl over a boy she liked, and these sorts of accounts of responses to feelings of jealousy were common:

I express my feelings a lot. I'm not scared to say what I feel. If I don't like someone, I go up to them "I don't like you!" There was this girl, who kept on stroking Dan so I grabbed her neck and she was bending over on the steps, and I said, I'm gonna like push you over here if you don't leave him alone. So she said sorry. I let go of her and then she started feeling his leg again so I slapped her across the face. She wouldn't tell on me. I don't like her, she thinks she's it!

Many of the adolescents in Bryn Mawr casually refer to these outbursts as 'anger issues', seen in males and females alike, suggesting that they are fundamentally rooted in young peoples' habitus, irrespective of gender. Casual violence then, driven by emotion, was part of young peoples' everyday lifeworld. Cultural criminology has largely focused upon male

violence and masculinity in relation to the construction of 'hardness' or 'toughness' (Winlow 2001; Hall *et al.* 2008; Treadwell & Garland 2011; Ayres & Treadwell 2012; Hopkins & Treadwell 2014). However, whilst female and male young people may experience the same feelings such as jealousy and anger, these appear to be motivated by different factors. For instance, girls repeatedly informed me that relationships were the main reason for fighting between girls, but boys tended to start fights over material possessions. Katz has referred to the creation of 'toughness' as being "essentially a process of negation." (1988: 87) He stated that many constructions of masculine toughness involved being 'closed' and aloof, and that manoeuvres were necessary to invert "suggestions of a morally open self that are inevitably born in...everyday activities" (ibid.) Toughness and a marking of territory were constructed in this case by being open, and allowing the feelings of jealousy and anger to flow forth into violence. The account above shows that toughness is a 'natural attitude' and everyday activity. The fact that the other girl continued to "stroke Dan's leg" after she had been assaulted and threatened furthers this point; that casual violence has been normalised and accepted to a certain extent.

### **Dirt, litter, drugs and abjection**

Kristeva refers to a time when humans separated themselves off from animals; "which were imagined as representatives of sex and murder" (1982: 13), and which were therefore seen as dirty or unclean. In the same way, criminals are often described by the media in animal-like terms; the 'feral' underclass, monsters, in processes of othering in order to reinforce their highly marginalized status. Police anti-drugs campaigns used the slogan "rat on a rat",

bringing to mind the historical association between rats and disease, in order to reinforce the image of needles filled with blood – blood being abject as a fluid separated from the integrity of the body and a vehicle for spreading disease. (Young 2008b) Indeed, some of the young people in the preventative activities project used the same group of terms interchangeably to describe undesirable and marginalised people living on the estates; chav, druggies or rats. These processes of dehumanising subjects, by imagining them as animals results in the controlling mechanisms in place in bureaucracy and state policy being applied in order to bring order to the human world; simply put, animal bodies need to be caged, sedated, observed and generally rejected from human society. They are, in Mary Douglas's (1966) terms "dirt" as "matter out of place." Similarly, those who showed a disregard for the social rules regarding matter in its correct place were deemed as dirty and abject by ones who didn't:

There's a big gang of them down there. They're out 'til quite late at weekends and summer. The rubbish is getting to be an issue too. The kids are always dropping rubbish. One time, the road was covered in rubbish and there were rocks everywhere, it was maddening when you drove up there. (Amy)

Caroline: There are a few people, a very small minority of people that are actually quite bad and... like the rubbish, all the rubbish outside, you know if I had a bed, I wouldn't put it out there, but because everyone else is doing it, why shouldn't I? Yeah? I wouldn't, because where I lived before, it wouldn't be acceptable to just chuck it outside (laughs) but you know!

Claudine: So you think a few people do it, and then everyone just thinks, oh why not?

Caroline: Yes! Behaviour breeds behaviours and yes – definitely...threatening behaviour, just generally people not picking up the rubbish...from their dogs, just a general disrespect for the others.

Caroline's sentiments mirrored broken windows theory; "behaviour breeds behaviours", as she reflected on why she shouldn't also dump rubbish. Indeed, the most common form of complaint was pertaining to dog excrement, which was generally perceived as the worst problem on the estates. According to the Policing and Community Safety Officer, bins had been provided in the past, but had been vandalised. Walking around the estates, it could be seen that many people did attempt to clear up after their dogs, but then left the bags lying around, or tied to fences. There was somebody complaining about it at every Policing and Community Team meeting that I attended. It was also mentioned frequently in interviews with parents, but never by young people. Caroline's account in particular alludes to the fact that 'matter out of place' challenges the borders between individual and social, inside and outside. If the bed had remained indoors, it would not have disrupted her ordered lifeworld. As she had ended up living in the flats at Bryn Mawr through unfortunate circumstances, her habitus – the ingrained habits built up over a lifetime of tidiness and hygiene - was disturbed by the bed thrown outside her flat. On the contrary, Tim, who had not had a home he had particularly cared about before, was more relaxed about furniture being discarded outside and rather than reacting in an emotional and embodied manner to it, simply found a solution. Tim suggested that the responsibility for removing unwanted items should be placed upon the local authority. As he did not own a car, he could easily empathise with people who wanted to get rid of something but did not have the means to do so:

There's a lot of fly tipping, wardrobes and all that...but then again, the council could just get on the case and say to people who haven't got cars, let's take it away. (Tim)

It was commonly acknowledged that there was a lot of substance abuse on the estates, and it could even be asserted that there was a 'natural attitude' towards recreational cannabis use among many people. However, the attitudes towards the context of the use, and the types of people imagined to be using cannabis showed that because it was being done in Bryn Mawr by certain people, it was somehow different to recreational use elsewhere and was therefore more abject:

You see 13 year olds doing pot and lager and stuff, the youngest smoker is ten, or nine....loads of girls do it, I think there are more boys doing it but the girls are more slaggy...like their reputation isn't very good, they've done lots of stuff before, they're thirteen to sixteen. (Natalie)

Caroline's views on recreational cannabis use showed that she found it unacceptable in Bryn Mawr, even though she admitted later in the interview that she did not have a problem with people using drugs recreationally, and admitted to having taken them herself in the previous six months:

Claudine: What about drug use in the area, do you think there's a lot of that?

Caroline: Yes! I think generally, people smoke pot an awful lot. Just to wind down, but people do that in every society. You're just seeing a dirtier version of it here.

Claudine: Why do you say dirtier?

Caroline: Because it is, it is a more raw setting, so you're going to see the dirty end of everything. But it goes on in every community.



The intravenous heroin user is particularly abject, because drug using is an intensely embodied experience, and heavy use involves intimate awareness of bodily fluids. Drug use requires a confrontation of the abject within the self with regard to bodily fluids and processes of bodily separation. Similarly, heroin users come face to face with their own blood every time they inject and puncture the skin – the border between self and other, and are also, in lucid moments aware that an overdose could result in death. Even suffering, as an addict, or as simply a casual user “coming down” of the high can be an embodied form of resistance to the symbolic order, as expulsion occurs in the form of vomiting. Martin, who was known in Bryn Mawr to be an ex-heroin user, explained how his abject status had affected his daughter:

Martin: There are still a few parents round here who won't let their kids come over to the house to get her. They think their child will fall on an AIDS infested needle I have left lying around (laughs).

Claudine: Seriously?

Martin: Well, probably. That's what I imagine the reason is anyway.

Martin's experiences and perceptions reveal both the idea of the *inscribed* and *performative* body at the individual, social and political level, and the body as *lived* - as a ground of being-in-the-world. His subjective experiences as an ex-heroin addict can be understood as not only produced by the political, legal and socio-cultural structures which define him, but also his descriptions of the lived embodied experience of using heroin feed into a sense of abjection in non-users who imagine and encounter his life-world.

Meurig has been aware that there is a lot of substance misuse on the estates, but is always surprised by the people who are involved. As he manages a business in Bryn Mawr, he has daily contact with residents, and is serving people every day:

There are ongoing concerns with drugs, drug abuse, you see that with the raids, the arrests made, and you often see Bryn Mawr addresses in the local newspaper. It is a surprise to us when we see these addresses in the newspaper...they come in here and we're clueless, we're always surprised when we see the names...we certainly would not think they were drug addicts ...some supply it even....we talk about it sometimes and say you know, we only served them last week and here he is, going down...

As substance abuse is generally occurring within the domestic sphere, it is generally invisible unless one lives in the flats. It is therefore not seen as problematic in contrast to alcohol consumption and anti-social behaviour such as littering which is ordinarily carried out in public space. It is only when someone has been labelled a drug user that they take on an abject status amongst non-users. This follows Mary Douglas' idea that "dirt is matter out of place."

### **The maternal body, abjection and the body politic**

Kristeva (1982) argues that it is the maternal body which is most abject, as it is the maternal body from which we are all separated from, thus creating us as individual identities within the symbolic order. There is an inherent tension between maternal authority and the law of the father, or governance, in a Foucauldian sense. Interestingly, much of New Labour's policy towards young people called for a greater parental authority, yet simultaneously

seized control of it for the purposes of implementing further social controls and repressing m/others. For instance, The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 included sections on Parenting Orders and Child Curfew Schemes. On the one hand, New Labour lamented the loss of the nuclear family and blamed this for the fragmentation of communities, whilst on the other, criminalising those (women) who were left to pick up the pieces. A high proportion of young people who offend are from lone parent families, and 92% of lone parent families in the UK consist of single mothers. Hence, crime control policy can be seen as specifically targeting mothers as a mediating force through which the state can operate. Women's bodies then, are not only used to reproduce the social order, but also to control young people who resist it, or face sanctions themselves. This in short, constituted another level of punishment by association; along with siblings, mothers could also potentially face being criminalised if one member of the family was associated with a deviant group.

## **Summary**

In this chapter, the disparate understandings of what constitutes crime and anti-social behaviour in Bryn Mawr have been described. Initially, the Anti-Social Behaviour Act was discussed and the discrepancies between definitions from the perspective of implementation. Mathews and Briggs have discussed the blurring of the meanings of 'crime', 'disorder' and 'anti-social behaviour', stating that 'disorder' used to describe actual physical offences such as vandalism, but is now applicable to social and behavioural issues such as drinking in public places and prostitution. They argue that this "conceptual slippage...does not...detract from the significance of these various activities, but rather serves as a self-reinforcing discourse that increases their profile and allows inflated claims to be made about the cumulative impact." (2008: 87)

The concepts of docile and abject bodies as dialectically produced were described through a look at Foucault's idea of diffuse disciplinary power and Kristeva's concept of abjection. From this point, attitudes to formal controls within Bryn Mawr were briefly described. It was frequently revealed through interviews and participant observation that people displayed a 'natural attitude' to crime and anti-social behaviour in Bryn Mawr, particularly in relation to young people staying out late, fighting amongst themselves and experimenting with cigarettes, alcohol and cannabis. Additionally, parents accepted certain behaviours that others found intimidating. Behaviours displayed regularly in public tended to be normalised by people living around them. As such, they become part of the neighbourhood habitus or lifeworld of Bryn Mawr for certain social groups. Generally, behaviours which occur in domestic or private space are ignored, even by close neighbours. Fighting amongst young people is common, yet there are unspoken agreements that fights are not reported, and for most people, friendships are retained in the long term. In these cases, there are probably a range of nuances between what can be established as playfulness and outright violence. However, fights caused by relationship issues which are due to jealousy seem to have longer lasting effects, especially amongst females. There are dominant tropes of what constitutes anti-social behaviour among youth groups in Bryn Mawr, and these groups are frequently presented as an homogenous and universalist entity – that of a chav gang. Some of the participants in this study self-labelled as chavs, yet the accounts of the stereotypical chav gang behaviours was different from the social meanings and lived realities of the young people that were expressed during the research. Consequently, many of the responses to the young people in Bryn Mawr have largely been blunt instruments which have been allied

to the fear, and in some cases, justifiable, of others living there. Further, there is a conflict in the data between the young people who claim to be setting up their own small groups, which suggests that they are more protean in character, and the 'eyes' in Bryn Mawr who believe that there is always going to be more of the same larger group; in that when one group of adolescents grows out of anti-social behaviour, the next group will inevitably take over. Therefore, on the one hand, there is potentially an ongoing wider neighbourhood habitus, with different subjects acting within it at different times, or there is a continually shifting dynamic in relation to young people and their behaviours.

Mostly, people expressed concern over outward displays of "dirt as matter out of place", such as litter, discarded furniture and dog excrement. Yet the casual violence and hints of abuse in the domestic sphere was ignored. Similarly, the abject status of the maternal was acknowledged in relation to the provisions made for the criminalisation of parents whose sons and daughters became involved in anti-social behaviour, in a further attempt to create docile mothers. Abjection is thus "[A] matter of the energies, the practices, the works of division that act upon persons and collectivities such that some ways of being, some forms of existence are cast into a zone of shame, disgrace or debasement, rendered beyond the limits of the liveable, denied the warrant of tolerability accorded purely a negative value." Rose (1999:253) However, abjection as a lived reality can be potentially emancipatory because marginalisation drives resistance. As criminologists who study what mainstream society considers abject, this raises questions about our implication in the process of understanding crime and anti-social behaviour; reflexively, abjection is a double-edged sword.

Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask,  
and he will tell you the truth.

Oscar Wilde (date unknown)

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **Existential interactions: performance, becoming, crime and anti-social behaviour**

#### **Introduction**

The idea that social life is akin to a type of performance is one that has been explored by different social theorists from a variety of analytical backgrounds. In this section, I am going to talk about the tension between inauthenticity and authenticity in perceptions and

experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour, in relation to the concepts of identity, performance, performativity, and mimesis. Firstly, I am going to broadly discuss to what extent criminal or anti-social behaviour can be understood as authentic if conceived of in the aforementioned terms, through a reflection on the data. Following the undercurrent of sexuate difference which has pervaded the research data and its analysis, I am then going to say why I think that locating authenticity in the performed behaviours of female participants and discussing it adequately within existing criminological discourse has been particularly problematic.

## **Authenticity**

We are absolutely artificial.

(Irigaray 2011)

An important place to begin is in an examination of the notion of authenticity itself. It can be construed as an ideal state of being to be achieved in individual or social terms, or as an actualisation of a symbolic process or value. It is consequently a mutable concept; personally, socially and circumstantially situated. Nonetheless, the desire for authenticity in its myriad forms - but particularly in relation to identity and stability - is becoming progressively more persistent in postmodern consumer society, in which everything from technology to human relationships are perceived as increasingly artificial, fleeting and unstable (see, for example Lyotard 1979; Bauman 2000, 2004, 2006; Zizek 2005). Jock Young refers to this state as inducing an ontological insecurity, and he focuses upon its relation to materialism, diversity, integration and immigration in society, and consequentially, the



desire for self-essentialising and essentialising the other (1999: 14-15, 103-104). This insecurity and crises of identity is fuelled by a lack of self-certainty and a plurality of possible social worlds which results in the reassertion of moral values, rigidity of beliefs, punishment of transgressive individuals and groups, and social exclusion. Inevitably, specific social groups are demonized, criminalised and as Young argues, individuals are created as monsters. Although Young's argument implies that those doing the judging, asserting moral values and demonizing groups and individuals are inherently those who desire a solid identity for themselves amidst the flux and instability of late modern society, they have ironically been in effect, essentialised by him as primarily members of dominant social groups. Yet, following Willis (1977), he also points to the possibility of those excluded actively engaging with exclusionary methods themselves, for instance by using aggression. The upshot of this is referred to as a 'dialectics of exclusion', in which deviancy is amplified alongside marginality (Young 1999: 12-13). It is within this dialectics that individuals search for meaning, belonging and the means to live a 'truth': "The terrors of anomie, of an awareness of existential aloneness and isolation, are protected by [a] suspension of doubt...The precariousness of human existence, the need for a viable *Umwelt* necessitates a whole series of defensive mechanisms." (Ibid: 97) In this context, authenticity might be sought differentially; both as a Zen Buddhist seeks enlightenment and as a hungry desperate lioness hunts her prey.

The trajectory of this discussion circles around the existentialists' idea of authenticity; an important theme within their wider *oeuvre*, which refers to being oneself and making choices consciously in relation to one's 'true' freedom. This key existentialist premise is found in

Heidegger's *Eigentlich* (which can also be translated as 'real'), although for him, authenticity carried no moral significance (Flynn 2006: 64). On the other hand, Sartre suggested that authenticity was a matter of living one's own truth, and that the inauthentic person is living a lie, and by implication is immoral. Inauthentic acts are thus either unconscious or are acts in the form of a mimicry, in accordance with an idea of how one should act in a particular role, often adhering to a social norm without self-consciously thinking about it. Nietzsche prescribed a state of 'becoming what one is', and Kierkegaard thought of subjective truth as something which one appropriates, in order to make one's own. Where Kierkegaard and Sartre differ is that Kierkegaard's subjectivity is in conflict with Sartre's idea that authenticity is based in a factual truth about being human, in relation to which individuals make choices in accordance with themselves. This involves two factors – 'facticity' and 'transcendence.' Facticity is the concrete situation we find ourselves in and includes our previous choices, our social position, nationality and cultural affiliation, whilst transcendence is dynamic and determines how we deal with the facticity of our given situation (ibid: 64-67). Heidegger refers to these factors in temporal terms; facticity relates to our past, or 'thrownness', whilst transcendence is 'ek-sistence' or the possibilities of the future. In the present, we are simply immersed. Time is thus *Dasein* (Being). Heidegger (1962) refers to at least four concepts of temporality; the most important is 'authentic' or 'primordial' temporality, which he considers to be the temporality of resolute or unyielding *Dasein*. Secondly, he refers to 'inauthentic' temporality, which is aligned to everyday or mundane time. There is then public time, or the site of our encounters with others, and finally 'ordinary' time which is homogenous and linear, and which he equates with Aristotlean understandings of time.

Already, in terms of the potential of an existentialist criminology, and most notably in relation to ethics, the idea of authenticity and its flip side, inauthenticity, are raising problems. Firstly and simply, is criminal and anti-social behaviour authentic and aligned to unyielding Dasein or can it be inauthentic – perceived as simply performative perhaps? How can we situate sexuate difference within this picture? The former of these issues begins to be addressed by Don Crewe, who does so through an interrogation of the concept of ‘will’, and a discussion of the problems attached to the notion of agency, which he argues is opposed to structure (2009: 12-50). He works through a complex argument beginning with Matza’s *Delinquency and Drift*, and making forays into Heidegger’s *Being and Time* and the work of Derrida. Then he pulls a few symbolic interactionists out of the bag, and whilst it would initially seem that symbolic interactionism and existentialism would make unhappy bedfellows, Crewe demonstrates convincingly that they can actually enrich each other; “This is the period of the now – of what we are – and what we are is our current performance.” (Ibid: 37). Most significantly, Crewe develops the sociologist Erving Goffman’s work on performance and George Herbert Mead’s work on the self, pointing out that:

When Mead speaks of self he speaks of that which we can see when we look at ourselves. For Goffman the concept is more nebulous, not least because, for Goffman, the self can be that which other people see. This raises problems associated with authentic performances...In Goffman, we see two seemingly contradictory expressions of what the self is. First, he suggests on the one hand that the self is purely socially generated with no essential foundation. On the other hand he suggests a dualistic view in which there is an unsocialised component that drives the individual to social interaction or isolation, and may promote deviant behaviour. Second, there is the suggestion that individuals are not fully determined by society, but are able to manipulate situations through performances rather in the way that actors do on stage. On the other hand again,

Goffman suggests that we are not entirely free to choose which images of self we present. (Crewe 2009:37).

I intend to return briefly to Mead's concept of the self later. Certainly, Goffman's ideas regarding the self are contradictory. In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, he laid the foundations of a theory of "impression management", maintaining that every individual is an actor on a stage performing to an audience. Influenced generically by the works of Simmel (Wolff 2011 [1923]), Mauss (2004) and Blumer (1969) in addition to Burke's (1966, 1972) idea of dramatism, Goffman argued that the performative is everyday life, and vice-versa, and it could be argued that criminality can be perceived as just people going about the daily business of crime. Significantly, Hardie-Bick and Hadfield's readings of Goffman ally his thinking closely with aspects of Sartre's existentialism. They argue that both Goffman and Sartre allude to an "essential inner character behind one's acts" (2011: 16), and further, that Sartre's ontology is founded upon the idea that existence precedes essence, as Goffman portrays an individual free to perform and manage multiple identities (ibid). As mentioned earlier, Denzin has stridently asserted that Goffman's preoccupation with illusion and reality presumed that staged versions of reality corresponded to the real world. Further he proposed that dramaturgical approaches should be buried, and that "there are no originals against which illusions are measured, no imitations, only new experience, no hyperreality." (2003: 130)

According to Richard Schechner, performance is about organised human behaviour in front of witnesses and this can happen in diverse situations which are not always discriminated from each other. Performance occurs in events in everyday life, such as cooking, socialising,

in entertainments, in work and play, and in sexual activity (1998: 361, 2006: 31). It has affiliations with and shares a common origin with performativity (Butler 1990, 1994, 1997) and anthropology (Turner 1986; Schechner 1969, 1973, 1977; Barba 1982). Performance is all of the following: an embodied processual engagement, a speech act, an interaction, an encounter, a temporal and spatial zone. Further, although performance can be normative, it is also potentially a transgressive liminal space in which dominant values and norms can be questioned, resisted and reformed. Denzin, perceiving Goffman's analysis as somehow lacking, in that it depends upon the notion of performance as imitation and mimesis, is in agreement with Butler's notion that there are no identities existing prior to performance. (2003: 136) This relegates embodiment as meaningless, despatched into discourse. He argues that Taussig's (1993) model of mimesis is potentially a political site of resistance, which is otherwise lacking in Goffman's work. This idea is not new to Taussig however, as Luce Irigaray challenged Platonic and Aristotelean views on mimesis long before Taussig and proposed that the use of mimesis could be utilised for the purposes of dissent (for an explicit example, see Kozel 1996). Further, Denzin fails to acknowledge the recognition of power relations inherent in some of Goffman's work, such as *Stigma*. However, what Denzin does, is draw attention to a few of the ways in which Goffman's work can be expanded upon, by returning to a performance-based approach to fieldwork, writing and politics, which "reclaims Mills' progressive discourse" (2003: 138), and subsequently enhances the *Sociological Imagination*, and perhaps also Jock Young's version particular to criminology; that of the *Criminological Imagination*. What needs to be done, then, is to look at acts that are transgressive primarily through the analytical framework left by Goffman, and see how

they stand up in terms of liberatory potential. This can be achieved by re-working Goffman's ideas in conjunction with other related concepts in existentialism and feminist theory.

## **Performativity**

Judith Butler (1990) is well-known for challenging embodiment as a foundation for social engagements and encounters, and contests constructivist positions, by questioning the difference between signs and referents. Along with Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Luce Irigaray, Erving Goffman has had a profound influence on the feminist philosopher and queer theorist Judith Butler, whose work has primarily focused on gender performativity. Despite her rejection of embodiment as a ground for 'doing', her influence in relation to performance has been immense and is therefore worthy of some attention. In *Gender Trouble* (1990), Butler questions dualistic assumptions about gender identity and suggests that gender is both constituted and performed through repetitive performances. Gender is therefore 'done', as opposed to being inherently pre-existing. In concurrence with Butler, Elin Diamond refers to performance simply as a "doing and a thing done" (1996: 1). Butler's main interest lies in performative acts as authoritative speech, as she examines how gender performativity is both produced and reproduced through discourse (see Butler 1990, 1997a, 1997b). Performativity for her, is positioned in the discursive power "to reproduce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains." (1993: 2) Butler's particular development of performativity as a theory has been criticised in a number of ways. Lloyd (1999) has argued that Butler focuses too much on individuals and does not consider other people's

involvement in performances, for example as audiences and witnesses, nor does she reflect upon the surrounding and contextual spaces. Following this, Gregson and Rose (2000) have explored the potential for “taking Butler elsewhere” in a paper which simultaneously situates performances both spatially (in terms of geographical places), and in the discursive production of knowledge of particular subjectivities. Additionally, due to this perceived lack of social and spatial contexts in Butler’s work, it was more recently argued that her ideas are more relevant to literary theory instead of social theory (Bricknell 2005).

Whilst Butler’s contention that gender is quite simply performative is appealing in terms of its transgressive and liberatory potential, her focus rests upon gender primarily in terms of sexuality as opposed to Irigaray’s idea of sexuate difference based on a natural embodiment from birth, irrespective of later expressions of sexuality and gender. Butler’s feminism differs from Irigaray’s in an additional key way; namely, the lack of the necessity for a feminine subject. Butler observed that by presuming to represent women, feminism confirmed its singular interest in women, whilst the political establishment spoke for the universal. Following this, she argued that promoting rights in the name of women would discourage some women from accepting the category because they had no interest in particular policies, or who did not conceive of themselves as ‘oppressed’. (Butler 1990: 4). Here, Butler could be criticised once more for her refusal to see women as a collective social group as different to men, and falls into the trap of what Irigaray (2011) refers to as the neutering of individuals. It is this very idea of the neutral which disguises the inherently masculine nature of the most fundamental structures of collectives from sub-cultural groups to communities to political regimes. Irigaray continues to insist on the ontological difference

between sexed bodies, without abandoning ethics. Ironically, in Butler's deconstruction of gender, in which Butler attempts to displace 'heteronormativity', she simultaneously deprives the feminine of its potential for authenticity, thus transporting the feminine back into its existential status as other. Recognition of the feminine as authentic is crucial; Butler's project of feminism without a subject is impossible for sociologists as feminist research needs a self-conscious and moreover, *recognised* subject;

Self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself only insofar as it exists in and for another self-consciousness; that is, it exists only by being recognised and acknowledged.

(Hegel, quoted in *Lazare Mijuskovic 2012:98*)

In order to address these issues, a revisiting and contemplation of the works of Goffman and Irigaray on performance, masquerade and mimesis with the intention of forming a dialogue between the two are timely. Unlike Butler, Goffman and Irigaray both explicitly address ideas around performance in relation to groups, embodiment and space. They also both engage with existentialist philosophy to differing degrees. Following this, the philosophical schism between the concepts of *being* and *doing* can be interrogated through performances which simultaneously express primordial, experiential and transcendental aspects of knowledges of crime and anti-social behaviour. A consideration of the data in relation to their work on performance, masquerade and mimesis, can potentially lead to a theoretical approach to crime and anti-social behaviour which not only engages with the social interactions themselves, but also how the interpretation of them reflects the discursive limits of the discipline of criminology. This chapter will now move on to discussing Goffman's dramaturgical frameworks for understanding interactions in relation to the data collected for this study.



### ***Eigentlich* and the front and back stages**

Within Goffman's *regions* (1971: 107-40), behaviours can be organised and stylised. It is on the front stage where the public performance takes place, and the actor uses impression management to express particular images about themselves to the audience, constituting the desired self. The backstage is private, where the protected self dwells. Goffman deemed that people construct a strong barrier between front and back stages. To some extent, this is because the individual is vulnerable in the backstage, but it is also done to maintain the separation in order to preserve the audience's belief in the authenticity of the front stage performance which reflects the desired self. Taking all of his work into consideration, Goffman seems ambivalent about the situation of crime and deviance as either authentic or inauthentic behaviour. On the one hand, he is quite explicit about criminality or deviant acts when he discusses the idea of 'dirty work' behind the scenes of performance; "A...discrepancy between appearances and over-all reality may be cited. We find that there are many performances which could not have been given had not tasks been done which were physically unclean, semi-illegal, cruel, and degrading in other ways; but these disturbing facts are seldom expressed during a performance." (Goffman 1990 [1959]: 53) Here, Goffman implies that criminal activity or anti-social behaviour would theoretically lurk behind the masks of the socially accepted or desired performance, such as in the case of the con-man or fraudster. Goffman's ideas regarding the separate or dualistic aspects of life which are found throughout his works (for an explicit example, see *Asylums* 1961) have strongly influenced the ideas of cultural criminology, such as Presdee's (2000) idea of

“second-life criminality”, and Hopkins-Burke’s related “schizophrenia of crime.” (2009: 242)

On the other hand, Goffman alludes to occasions when deviants might flaunt their ‘rebellion’ against social norms, acting alone or in groups. Deviant behaviour within a deviant community may elicit front stage performances of deviance to an audience of outsiders who appear conform to social norms. However, deviant acts themselves can become performances to others in their group or “team” when those performances present a desired self which conforms to accepted behaviour within the group. (Goffman 1963: 167-174) In this case, a performed deviant act may not reflect a more moral self inhabiting the backstage. The data in this study suggests that deviant behaviour can be either exhibited on the front stage, or take place behind the scenes of a differently performed act. The dualistic front and back stages are implicit in Tim’s description of his double life between being a respectable parent on the one hand when his children are around, and his life as a single male when the children visit their mother:

I do play my music sometimes, but it’s always ....usually when the kids go off on a Friday...I’ll have a little drink and a smoke [cannabis]...and play my music loud...to sort of, more than anything, turn the Dad dial off...and then I’m sort of a young free single bloke for the weekend...and I have to switch, it’s almost like being a bit schizophrenic, almost, you know what I mean (Tim, 36)

Here, in Sartrean terms, it could be argued that Goffman’s backstage self that may include the “disturbing facts” of the “over-all reality” is in the realm of the authentic, whilst the “appearances” are inauthentic, and therefore a lie. Or, to put it another way; the behind the scenes “dirty work” represents the *Eigentlich* of Heidegger. We can locate an important theoretical link between Heidegger and Goffman; what takes place behind the scenes could be seen to relate to authentic or ‘primordial’ temporality, which Heidegger considers to be

the temporality of resolute or unyielding Being, whilst performance is simply 'inauthentic' temporality, which is aligned to everyday or mundane time. Are Tim's single lifestyle choices of loud music, alcohol and cannabis within the realm of the protected self, and by relation, his life as a father as an aspect of the desired self? Or is his need to play different roles an obvious threat to his identity, as one 'subjecthood' might assimilate the other?

### **Impression management**

As Goffman approached social interactions through the use of dramaturgical metaphor, he observed the reflexive nature of performance. Interaction was conceived as an engagement between different people; individuals and audiences or selves and others. Individual performers perform to audiences who interpret their behaviour; "When an individual plays a part he implicitly requests his observers to take seriously the impression that is fostered before them." (Goffman 1990 [1959]: 28). Within a neighbourhood setting such as Bryn Mawr, this can be accomplished by the management of visual appearances including the body and gestures and adornments such as clothing, jewellery and tattoos, presentation of the home and garden and ownership of a car. Adults within the neighbourhood often made judgements about other adults regarding their perceived material wealth as presented through ownership of cars and care of their homes. Frequently, adults were judged by other adults regarding their ability or inability to parent their children. This was more noticeable in the comments made by women who were mothers, such as Anna:

I think I will emphasise that the anti-social behaviour...is down a lot to parental neglect...you know, the parents don't give a stuff, and in fact, they want their kids out of their way...and not interested in...um...family days out and all that...or anything like that...so I'm a bit harsh saying they shouldn't go on (YOT) group, aren't I? Because they don't get fuck all else...

Caroline judges other women by the way they look and carry themselves, including gesture, demeanour and clothing as key in the making of assumptions about their lives at home, stressing the certain ways in which people 'give off' information about their interactions with others:

There are a lot of women who look very downtrodden... just the whole persona, you know, the way they carry themselves, the way they push their buggy with their head down. You know, they've got no particular style about them, they've just got this uniform on, I know you can't associate all that with domestic violence, but you know when you can see a woman who is shining and a woman who is not.

Here, Caroline's comments demonstrate the significance of how certain women's bodily practices informs her sense of femininity in herself and others. Reading body language based on experience, she refers to a perceived lack of individuality and particularity in terms of style as a 'uniform' of discontent. Following her sense of 'downtrodden women' and their polar opposite 'shining women', she goes on to make a radical statement about women who experience domestic violence:

Caroline: I think it is the women themselves that are stupid really! It is just a matter of allowing really isn't it? We allow everyone to get away with whatever we choose really...and if they want to shack up with these idiots, then they're allowing this to happen.

Young people are equally quick to make decisions about the natures and experiences of others in the neighbourhood, and although bigger houses are associated with greater wealth in young peoples' eyes, they predominantly focus upon physical appearance such as dress and jewellery. This situates other young people in positions as vulnerable, marginal, rough or cool.

Particularly among young people in Bryn Mawr, dressing the body is not an automatic behaviour – something one does when one awakes - but one that actively helps to create difference, identity and produce meanings about selves. Mary Douglas suggests that people use their own bodies as symbolic correspondences with which to think about society and the universe, yet also that there is a natural inclination to express situations of particular kinds in an “appropriate bodily style.” (1973: 72,97) Front and back stages might elicit different modes of styling the body through ways of dressing; what is seen on the street is not what is necessarily seen in the privacy of the home, as any parent of a teenager might be aware. Identity is often perceived as inherent to individuals, with clothes being an exhibition or portrayal of it; clothes have been seen as “expressions of identity, one of the perennial means whereby we signal to the social world who and what we are: they are part of our repertoire of social technology, a means whereby ideas of identity are grounded in the visual.” (Twigg 2007) However, clothing can also be used to create an impression of a desired self as part of an overall performance, or as a tool for conforming to the ubiquitous style of the aspired-to social group. Indeed, over a century ago, Simmel suggested that fashion must be interpreted in the context of either wanting to stand out, or wanting to fit in (1971[1904]).

As young people dress their bodies, they predominantly do so consciously and purposefully in relation to who will see them, and where they are going; as “an assemblage of body modifications...displayed by a person in communicating with other human beings.” (Eicher and Roach-Higgins 1991: 5) In this manner, Goffman’s observation that individuals identify the situation and audience that they will participate in is poignant. Misconstruing the situation can have disastrous results, often leading to embarrassment and identity destabilisation, and thus requires careful negotiation. Kummen and Brown (1985) noted that what people wear affects how other people behave towards them. Similarly, Johnson *et al.* (2008) observed that people attach meaning to certain modes of dressing, linking them with particular ways of being. The relationship between the individual and their social demands is essential to understanding how people bring together a presentation of self via clothing for the kinds of lives they lead.

Jessica described the way in which she and her friends dressed and how she felt her school teachers singled out young people who self-identified as emos. Despite feeling marginalised in school, Jessica demonstrated a dedication to her chosen style of dress as part of her sub-cultural group:

Claudine: Can you tell me what sort of things emos might wear and how they look?

Jessica: Like black stuff with like white or pink or purple but it has to have black on it

Claudine: Anything else?

Jessica: Eye liner

Claudine: And do the boys wear that too?

Jessica: Some do

Claudine: What does [the school] think about the way you dress...and hair styles and so on...

Jessica: Well, we're not allowed to wear like gloves that go up to our sleeves, but we're allowed to wear wristbands and bracelets and stuff...some teachers won't let us wear black nail varnish...

Claudine: So what happens if you wear black nail varnish?

Jessica: You have to take it off

Claudine: What about hair dyes and make up?

Jessica: Make up? Well, they try to like, make us take it off but some, just wouldn't cause like, well hair dye, they can't really...

Claudine: Can't make you change it to a more neutral colour?

Jessica: Well, they could, but no-one's gonna [change it]!

Claudine: So, what do teachers think of emos then generally? Do they treat them the same as everyone else?

Jessica: No!

Claudine: Why is that?

Jessica: I don't know....they just don't like us

Claudine: So they treat you differently?

Jessica: They just don't talk to us...at all... they won't let anyone else talk to us

Claudine: So, they stop people talking to you?

Jessica: They tell them off if they do, but we're allowed to talk to them

Claudine: So, do you think teachers try to make emos be on their own – or isolate them in a way?

Jessica: Yeah, that's like, why most, like emos, have emo friends because the rest of people think we're freaks.

For the majority of people interviewed, dress is a clear marker of belonging, sub-cultural affiliation and association with certain behaviours and demeanours. The data in this study is

in agreement with research carried out by Polhemus (1994) and Evans (1997), which suggest that the clothed body signifies the boundary of a given group. It was frequently mentioned by young people for example, that chavs must wear 'makes' or labels, regardless of whether they are a 'good' or 'bad' chav. However, amongst people in the 35-50 age group who were interviewed, and who did not know many specific individual young people, the chav dress code was associated with the Mawr Mob, a 'chav gang', and therefore all young people who wore this style were deemed to be anti-social trouble makers. Richard did not differentiate between the gang, the Mawr Mob, and the 'chav culture' he described in vivid detail, in terms of dress or style and behaviours, engaging in the essentialising process illustrated by Jock Young and referred to earlier. Davis (1992) suggested that clothing is a code which communicates complexity and ambiguity, and certainly for the police officers involved in reprimanding perpetrators of vandalism, not only were individuals difficult to make out, but gender roles within the gang were obfuscated by what they all wore:

Robert: I know, a couple of the PCSOs said they went onto the playing fields, and they would swap clothes as well, so you couldn't really tell who'd done it, you know they were kids! And you couldn't tell whether they were male or female on the CCTV camera at night if they're wearing hoodies, jeans and trainers. [In] the Summer, it just became unbelievable, and it became a cat and mouse game with the police; they would film with their cameras, the police chasing them, and then it would be on their site. So, it was all very animated and engineered.

Clothing in this instance was used to conceal individual identities rather than create them, by adhering to a set of group dress code 'norms', which further established a holistic and unified gang image. Almost like a uniform, chav identities were centred more around 'fitting in' and looking the same rather than 'standing out.' However, Jessica also described how masculine and feminine identities were deliberately blurred in emo style. Emos of both



sexuate identities had similar hairstyles, hair colours and often wore make-up, predominantly eye-liner. This sub-cultural style put heterosexual gender identity into question – and indeed Jessica reported that most emos she knew were bisexual. This idea of veiling differed from that carried out by chavs - in which all aspects of identity were concealed for the purposes of evading the police. This was an active disguise; for instance ordinarily boys had short hair or shaved heads whilst girls had long hair. Both concealed this by the wearing of hoodies, which have gained a reputation in the media of being associated with delinquency. Following Matza (1969) and Sartre (1964), Jock Young describes the relationship between deviant performers and their audience as potentially empowering for the performer; “the process of embracing the essence bestowed upon the deviant can be taken up ironically, mockingly and transformatively. But even so, it still shapes individuals’ notions of themselves.” (1999: 118)

Young people also made self-conscious yet quick judgements regarding others who were likely to be ‘rough’, trouble-makers or perpetrators of anti-social behaviour, based on their initial impressions of how others presented themselves:

Claudine: So, how do you know they’re rough kids, is it because of their behaviour, or the way they look?

Sarah: Mostly, you can kind of tell by the way they look, I know that you shouldn’t judge a book by its cover, but with rough people in Bryn Mawr, you can...because erm, like Aaron, he smokes, he’s got quite a messy appearance, and there are other people who have their nose pierced, their eyebrows pierced, their lips pierced, and they are my age, 12.

It has been suggested that tattoos and body piercings may be used to reflect a rejection of societal norms and expectations, in which the body is used as a ‘site of resistance’. (Preston & Ustundag 2005: 220). An array of piercings and tattoos might represent a symbolic

boundary; a means of “bringing order into experience.” (Douglas 1973: 73) Others have argued that control over the body through alterations suggests a lack of social power (Bell & Valentine 1995). This is a pertinent observation in the context of the some of the young people in Bryn Mawr involved in this study. However, clothing and body alterations also form part of a collective impression management of a particular group or subculture. The prevalence of piercings amongst young people could also indicate that some may feel pressured to present themselves in a certain way to ‘fit in’ with the group in “interaction with similarly expressive others.” (Brisett & Edgley 1990: 3). When young people in the study who had piercings were asked what their reasons were for acquiring them, the most common answer was “to be different.” Others stated that it was considered “cool” in their social group. This demonstrates a dichotomy between a desire for a collective identity and a rejection of the social norms of mainstream society, and indicates that amongst young people, tattoos and body piercings represent a structuring feature in their lives, as part of the holistic presentation of the desired self. Indeed, piercings and tattoos demonstrate a degree of self care and simultaneous toughness which can prevent bullying or being ‘picked on.’ Young people who do not pay attention to appearance either through lack of self-worth or poverty and give off fear are often the victims of bullying. This is especially so when their families are not known.

Lucy: There was lot of bullying up there going on like, they would just target people who knew they couldn’t stand up for themselves and stuff. It wasn’t very nice.

Claudine: So what sort of people were doing the bullying and what sort of people were being bullied?

Lucy: People who didn’t have much money and didn’t dress very nice, or was a bit scraggy, people like that.

Claudine: They were being bullied?

Lucy: Mmm, when I was little it would be people like that.

Turner has commented upon the reflexive nature of performance, stating that the performer may come to know themselves better through acting, and that a group of human beings may achieve self-knowledge through observing and participating in performances presented by another group. (1986: 81) Indeed, there is a degree of reflection on the performer's part regarding their own role; "At one extreme, one finds that the performer can be fully taken in by his own act; he can be sincerely convinced that impression of reality which he stages is the real reality...At the other extreme, we find that the performer may not be taken in at all by his own routine." (Goffman 1990[1959]: 28) Undeniably, behind Goffman's observations of embodied performative interactions, there are conscious, self-reflective, active and emotional selves and Goffman particularly alerts us to this in *Stigma*. (1963) Performance then, can be conceived of us as much more than merely the wearing of a mask, or using the body as a "peg" on which a person's self is "hung for a time." (Goffman 1990 [1959]) Martin reflectively revealed that for him personally, the edgework of dealing heroin was far more exciting and life affirming than being a heroin addict:

Martin: But personally speaking, and it took me a very long time to identify this properly; what I found attractive, and exciting and sexy...and dangerous and cool...was not doing heroin, which I found sad and boring in the end, but it was heroin dealing, which I found almost irresistible. It was just so much fun. It was so exciting. It was like being a spy in the 70s. It was brilliant. It was wicked. Cool. Now that's being very honest. And that was my problem. It took me a very long time to identify that that was my problem, which is why I was having such a hard time disassociating myself fully from that world. And I became very good at it, and so I knew most of the people who were involved in that world, on both sides of the law. And almost all of them liked me and respected me, whatever they felt about my particular position vis a vis the law. And so that gave me access to a huge, huge, amount of information that most people simply don't have.

Claudine: So what was so exciting about dealing then? Was it the covert lifestyle?

Martin: Yeah, totally, I know something you don't know. You're coming to me cause you can't do it and you don't know anyone else except me who can do it because I am clever, I am cool, I am special...total, total ego. And I fucking loved it. I have to admit that.

Claudine: And so, you got caught?

Martin: Hell, yeah! Oh yeah, yeah, definitely! Well, no actually, well yeah I did! Somebody else got caught, and as a result of which I got wound up...

Claudine: In the whole thing?

Martin: In the whole thing, yeah.

Claudine: So, how did the dealing affect your sense of identity?

Martin: Oh, totally, total ego, man. It totally bolstered my own opinion of myself. Yeah, it gave me pride and confidence, which I agree I should have been getting from working. But it was just on another level. It was totally secret and dangerous, that's the thing. Going to work generally isn't dangerous. Doing that, is. There are violent unpredictable people, there's police, there's...you have to be quick and intelligent and aware on so many levels. You have to be, to be able to do it successfully, and to engender the kind of trust and respect across the board that I did, you have to be able to really keep things together quite well, and I got a real buzz knowing I was doing it well, I got a real buzz out of the feedback from other people saying to each other, he's the one, he'll sort it out, ask him, you know. Not supplying heroin, I don't mean, but people involved in the supply network coming to me with problems and issues and me solving them, sorting things out, being able to arrange things...

Part of his enjoyment of heroin dealing lay in the image he held of himself as a 'spy', and in particular within the context of the Cold War. Martin was fully taken in by his own leading role in the imagined narrative of an espionage thriller, in which he was the spy that all sides trusted, yet always dodging violent associates and the police. Most importantly, he self-consciously revelled in the audience's feedback, and in being depended upon to trouble shoot problems in the network. Martin's role became a part of his life, his identity, encompassing his entire reality so that he could not shake it off, despite having no need for

the drug itself anymore. The glamour of his 'job' amongst his acquaintances is inconsistent with the sense of revulsion ordinarily associated with heroin use and dealing, even amongst users of other recreational drugs (see, for example Allen 2007: 89-90). Further, his sense of connectedness to the role of a 1970s spy, demonstrates an attachment to a particular type of fractured masculinity which he felt comfortable embodying, having grown up with the espionage film genre that was rampant during the Cold War years. This type of masculinity demanded a centre stage role, around which other actors played villains or inferior parts such as police or law enforcers who simply got in the way. It embodied simultaneously a heroic warrior risk taking type of masculinity and an intelligent, alert and charming one; exactly what you would expect to find in a character such as James Bond. Like many edgeworkers, Martin took part in "life threatening or anomie-producing activities." (Lyng and Snow 1986: 169). Despite its context, Martin's perception of himself conforms to Messerschmidt's idea of hegemonic masculinity which "emphasises practices toward authority, control, competitive individualism, independence, aggressiveness, and the capacity for violence." (1993: 82)

This internalised perception of idealised and heroic or 'good' masculine subject is ruptured by the realisation that the "sexy...wicked...cool" lifestyle is at an end and Martin is going to prison for his part in the heroin ring. His performance, however successful for a time, is over; the audience has changed as Martin's position has moved from the spotlight amongst his acquaintances in the heroin world, to being under the police force's gaze. His identity is 'spoiled'; he now embodies 'bad' or deviant masculinity. Before this rupture, Martin may have been subject to what Goffman refers to as 'self-distantiation'; "namely, that process by

which a person comes to feel estranged from themselves.” (1990 [1959]: 87) Goffman argues that individuals become insincere when they have to maintain a working consensus by performing different roles to different audiences, and when “performer and audience become compressed into the same individual.” (Ibid) In other words, this occurs when what Goffman terms the ‘role distance’ collapses and an individual’s previous experience of a separation of role from the self gets lost. In Mead’s terms, the ‘I’ and the ‘me’ become fused. These processes of either becoming exiled from the self, or of wandering lost in the simultaneous lives of both performer and audience could be understood as placing an individual in the realm of the inauthentic. Yet on the contrary, Ferrell (1998), Lyng (1990) and Katz (1988) argue that the risk taking of edgework can potentially lead to transcendence. The frame of Martin’s ‘other’ life – unemployed, claiming benefits and living in social housing symbolised the *thrownness* of his situation - the mundane - whilst the choices he made to engage what was to him, the exciting world of heroin dealing, possibly allowed him, for a time, to live an authentic existence:

Many people prefer not to acknowledge their freedom as conscious subjects and convince themselves that they have to act in certain ways. They may deny their freedom and justify their actions by deceiving themselves that they had no other choice and that their actions were determined by forces beyond their individual control. These states of denial provide psychological props through which people seek to escape the anxieties provoked by their freedom and responsibilities, allowing them to live an inauthentic existence – what Sartre refers to as ‘Bad Faith’. The existence of Bad Faith would not be possible without the ability of human beings to detach themselves and nihilate being. (Hardie-Bick & Hadfield 2011:16)

However, rather than transcend his position in plural ways including the thrownness of his embodiment, Martin chose to attempt to adhere to established constructs of masculinity; as

Messerschmidt, like others, has pointed out “for many men, crime serves as a ‘resource’ for doing gender” (1993: 84, see also Winlow 2001; Hall 2002). The narcissism inherent in Martin’s performance relied strongly upon his audience’s embroilment and acceptance of his activities, yet even after his arrest, at which point the dominant audience (including himself) altered, and much self-reflection, Martin still felt the sensuous memory of the thrill of dealing. Here Goffman’s concept of team is not so straightforward and the borders defining the performer from their audience become blurred:

The concept of team allows us to think of performances that are given by one or more performers...earlier it was suggested that a performer may be taken in by his own act, convinced at the moment that the impression of reality which he fosters is the one and only reality. In such cases the performer comes to be his own audience; he comes to be the performer and audience of the same show.

(Goffman 1990 [1959]: 86)

## **Teams**

Ordinarily, Goffman’s concept of team is useful for understanding how performances come to be accepted by audiences. His idea of ‘performance teams’ is helpful for examining how groups within a community create and maintain their identity through collective action, speech and understanding of events and situations.

It is apparent that if members of a team must cooperate to maintain a given definition of the situation before their audience, they will hardly be in a position to maintain that particular impression before one another. Accomplices in the maintenance of a particular appearance of things, they are forced to define one another as persons ‘in the know’, as persons before whom a particular front cannot be maintained.

(Ibid:88)

Jessica (11) is quick to point this out, referring to the 'freak' nature of the 'team' of emos in her neighbourhood and school:

That's like, why most, like emos, have emo friends because the rest of people think we're freaks, we are freaks, we try to be freaks – because like chavs try to blend in...but emos try to stand out, sort of thing...if there's an emo that won't admit that they're a freak, then they're lying...and they're being stupid because we are freaks but we learn to like it, and so do Goths and stuff.

Being a 'freak' is a self-imposed stigma, and learning to like it results in active disclosure. Whilst most research has demonstrated that individuals attempt to reduce stigma, Hughey (2012) has argued that some individuals and groups actively embrace and pursue a stigmatised identity in order to demonstrate allegiance to a social or political cause or set of ideals and prove authenticity. He called this 'stigma allure'. Here, Jessica makes attempts to cover for any emos who might refuse to admit that they are a freak; 'they're lying.' In Goffman's terms, these discrepancies in the overall impression of a 'team' are known as 'unmeant gestures' (Ibid: 203), and that further; "It should be added that the individual held responsible for contributing an unmeant gesture may chiefly discredit his own performance by this, a team-mate's performance, or the performance being staged by his audience." (Ibid: 203) To maintain a collective 'front', different groups within Bryn Mawr must present meticulous forms of 'impression management' in order to state clearly where their affiliation to particular beliefs and values lie; "Open disagreement in front of the audience creates, as we say, a false note." (Ibid: 92) This collective 'impression management' happens



across the age groups in varying degrees, although popularity and belonging within a sub-cultural group is crucially important to younger people.

When two teams present themselves to each other for purposes of interaction, the members of each team tend to maintain the line that they are what they claim to be; they tend to stay in character. Backstage familiarity is suppressed lest the interplay of poses collapse and all the participants find themselves on the same team, as it were, with no one left to play to.

(Ibid:166)

Whilst it became clear that the two main types of sub-cultural groups amongst young people in Bryn Mawr are chavs (including the gang known as the Mawr Mob) and emos, despite some major differences in style, image and music, both groups share certain behaviours with other young people which frequently signify 'coolness' and 'hardness' on the street, such as fighting, smoking, drinking alcohol and taking drugs.

Well, when we're walking down [to the bus], a lot of people smoke, yeah, just like smoke a lot...it's horrible when like people say, well children say to children "oh, save me a drag!" 'cause they're just kids. (Katie, self-labelled chav, 12)

Yeah, they were drinking and smoking and stuff, and it was quite an intimidating atmosphere, because there were quite older...they were fourteen, fifteen year olds and early twenties people there; there was quite a wide range of groups of children and young adults. (Andy)

Chavs are the most common generic group in Bryn Mawr, and particular 'teams' within the main chav group are known amongst the community to commit crimes and engage in anti-social behaviour, particularly the Mawr Mob:

Yeah, they do a lot of vandalism, graffiti and stuff...burst tyres on cars, cause my sister's boyfriend's little brother is in it, I think my sister's

boyfriend was in it, but then he stopped because otherwise he couldn't be with my sister...because he actually really likes my sister. (Katie, 12)

There's loads of gangs of older boys thinking they're really cool and that, and they spray paint and stuff...up by the underpass, by the boxing club...(Natalie and Gemma)

A young person talked candidly about how people judge chavs, and even though he does not like them personally as a general group, he is dismayed that people judged his friend so quickly:

[people become chavs] to fit in really. Not all chavs take drugs, I know quite a few that don't. And people think, oh look, he's wearing a trackie, he's going to be an absolute dickhead, like they think ah, he takes drugs, he's going to be an idiot...he's been in trouble with the police, he's going to be an absolute idiot, but one of my best mates I've known him since we were five, he's like, he's gotta be one of my, like best mates...and one of the best personalities I've like, ever come across...OK, right, he's stupid cause he does drugs, and smokes and all that, he's been in trouble with the police, but he's one of the nicest guys around, but peoples' perspective on him is gonna be quite bad just because of what they've heard...he's been in trouble for drugs, I think he's been in trouble for dealing but I don't think anything happened on that (weed, that kind of stuff), stealing I think, just those kind of things but it's like yeah, he's been a bit stupid doing that but he's still in school with me though, he's such a nice guy...he just got into the wrong crowd really. (Mike)

Chav is a label pinned on groups and individuals based on behaviours and dress. The word is used by young people to label both a style, and performed behaviour. Yet Mike acknowledges that what people see on the surface does not reflect the 'real' or 'authentic' identity or self underneath. Reminiscent of both Mead's concept of the 'I' and the 'me', and Goffman's protected self and desired self, Mike's description of his friend portrays the complexity of his character, and the rapid moral judgements others make about him, without knowing the underlying 'real' person.

The origins of the word 'chav' are debated amongst scholars, but it is accepted in the main that it derives from a Romani word meaning 'child.' Hayward and Yar suggest that 'chav' is just another reworking of the underclass idea (2006). Jones points out that is often claimed to be an acronym for 'Council Housed and Violent.' (2011: 206) It has become increasingly used this century to depict the white working classes and benefit claiming groups of Britain. With derogatory websites mushrooming on the internet, describing Britain's top ten worst chav towns and detailing chav behaviour, the chav has become a scapegoat for all of Britain's social problems; unemployment and long term benefit dependency, increasing need for social housing, low educational achievement, poor parenting, criminality and anti-social behaviour, notably amongst young people. It has, in effect, become a trope which symbolises all that the middle and upper classes of Britain despise, and a master status for individuals who superficially appear to comply with the stereotype.

Jones (2011) refers to this as a process of hatred-fuelled demonization and Young (1999) would consign it to essentialism which "can be used to demonize and dehumanize others and, as a consequence, to generate a vocabulary of motives which allows inhumanity. [Essentialism] greatly facilitates the process of social exclusion. It furnishes the targets, it provides the stereotypes, it allows the marshalling of aggression, it reaffirms the identity of the in-group-those with power and handy rhetoric." (Ibid: 117) McCulloch et al. claim that the word 'chav' (amongst related words) are used as 'othering' labels, and that people called chavs by others rarely identify with the label, nor feel that they belonged to a

homogenous group. (2006: 547-548) Similarly, Lawler states that the expression 'chav' is "imposed on people, rather than being claimed by them." (205: 802) However, although the label 'chav' is used in 'othering' processes by some residents (notably property owning and/or professionals) and members of different sub-cultural groups (predominantly emos), the label itself is also claimed and owned by some of the young people, who actively and proudly state that they are a 'chav'. There are also references to the perception that the label 'chav' is heterogeneous; there are 'good' and 'bad' chavs, and the Mawr Mob, who are in a category of their own. Whilst most concede that it is a 'chav' gang, most self-labelled 'chavs' who took part in the study did not admit any allegiance to it.

Whilst young people from any background are able to become emos, middle class young people do not choose to become 'chavs', although they might be accused by other young people of wearing 'chavvy' clothes such as hoodies and trainers; 'chavvy' being used as an insult in this case. Whilst emos also wear hoodies, they are differentiated by their other clothing and visibly artificial hair colours (which were discussed earlier) and by their taste in music, such as *My Chemical Romance* (known as *MCR*) and *Panic at the Disco*. Emos are more of a homogenous group than 'chavs' and are recognisable instantly by other emos as having similar music tastes and a depth of feelings similar to themselves. Sometimes, this 'depth of feelings' is distinguishable because of visible scars on the body.

### **'Harming' the (dramaturgical) body**

Both chav and emo groups have members who self-harm, although in Bryn Mawr, this is a trait generally associated with emos, whilst chavs are generally associated with causing harm to others. However, emos are categorised by the young people in Bryn Mawr as belonging to one of two separate groups; 'self-harming emos' and 'non-self-harming emos'. Self-harming is not only a complex ritual expression of difficult to manage emotions such as anger and depression, but also serves as a unifying performance of group affiliation.

Aaron done it because he was getting angry...and he just wanted to...bad things were happening, I don't know what...but like, he had a bad time with his life and he just wanted to like, hurt himself....he got bullied, not like really badly, but in the school, but you know by my mum's boyfriend's son Robert and his mates, they like put him in the bin, and called him names, you know those massive green bins...A girl, Lucy, right, jumped off a cliff, trying to kill herself and she ended up in hospital and had to go into care, she lived in our street, she was into the emo, that's where Aaron got all the emo stuff from. (Katie)

According to youth workers, Aaron was a victim of domestic violence at the hands of a boyfriend of his mother. Other residents told how this previous step father had been dealing drugs out of their family home, and that the children were kept awake all night due to clients turning up at the house at all hours of the night. His relationship with his sibling was deteriorating at the time of the research and there was sustained bullying in the home. In addition to this, he was being bullied at school. Self-harming was an outlet for his angst and difficult to cope with emotions. It is something learnt amongst young people, as Aaron learnt from his friend whose self-harming practices resulted in an attempted suicide. Contrary to popular belief, self-harm is not something performed back stage in most situations, but rather something shared in friendship groups on the front stage, along with the knowledge associated with self-harming techniques and technologies. This includes

which tools to use to generate wounds, for instance school compasses, the blade on a pencil sharpener, razor blades and knives.

Fieldnote, Surfing Activity, Youth Offending Team Preventative activities programme.

I gave Julia a lift home from Llangrannog beach. We had talked quite a bit in the day and got chatting in the car about family, school and life in general. She said she hated school and hated home. Her brother has ADHD and she can't handle it. All her mother's time is given to him and a younger sibling, and she feels isolated in her family. Her arms were so badly scarred from slash marks, there was more scar tissue than virgin skin. It made me shudder. I asked if things were that bad, nodding to her arm. She said it was the only thing that made her feel real. She had wrist bands on and I dreaded to think what her wrists looked like underneath.

Julie's expression of the maternal neglect she felt helped her to feel alive, through confronting her own death by making deep cuts into her skin. The realness she experienced when harming grounded her in the body, reminded her of its mortality. As such, it brought comfort and a regularity to her life amidst what otherwise seemed like chaos. She was able to transcend her situation by facing the abject; "Close description of what happens when people laugh, cry, get angry or get ashamed will show that emotions are not, as they have almost always been understood, in tension with thought, reason, or strategic self-examination. Just the reverse: emotions are lived as metamorphoses toward thought, as movements from an unself-conscious being-in-the-world to relatively more self-reflective postures." (Katz 1999)

Emo beliefs about chav opinions of them are bound up in knowledge about self-harming:

Claudine: So, what do chavs think of emos?

Jess: They think we're slitters

Claudine: So what is a slitter?

Jess: When you slit your wrists...and arms...and legs and like, slit anything really...

Claudine: And do you know any emos who do that?

Jess: Yeah!

Claudine: Do they give a reason for it?

Jessica: They are just depressed

However, chavs have also been known to self-harm, but rather than attribute it to depression, claim it is for a laugh, because it was fun or because it's 'hard':

Fieldnote, May 2010

We were going back to Bryn Mawr in the YOT minibus, when I noticed the horrific scars on Mark's arm. I asked him somewhat reservedly how he got them, assuming he had been in a fire, and a bit worried about bringing it up in conversation. Up to this point, I was thinking, what a brave lad, wearing a short sleeved shirt with such awful disfiguring scars on his arm. During the conversation, he was happy to describe in detail how he had sprayed hairspray over his arm before setting fire to it, and how he had enjoyed heating up the ring on the top of his lighter before stamping it onto his arm. He was disappointed that the horrific scars left by the hairspray dripping down his arm weren't uniform marks and that they were a bit messy, and also that he had not thought at the time that hairspray was going to stick to his hair and burn all the hairs off as well. When I asked him if it had hurt, he shrugged and said he was too "out of it" to notice. He did not perceive the experience as self-harming, but rather as "having a laugh with me mates". He made no attempt to conceal the scars on his arms as they were openly visible as he was wearing a short sleeved shirt. He then changed the subject and proceeded to tell me in detail about the people whose heads he had "kicked in" recently, and the methods he had apparently used. Later, another young person present told me how the first had not really kicked any people's heads in, and also how scarring yourself was currently fashionable and a sign of "hardness".

From an emotionalist perspective, the information gained from the first young person can be offered up in the terminology now typical of existentialist and cultural criminologies; the embodied thrill of playing with fire, and the adrenaline rush and satisfaction of inflicting harm, or imagining inflicting harm on another. Yet, this conversation also raised questions about how the will to violence can be inscribed upon the body, how membership to a group can be reconfirmed through the actions on the body, and also how the obvious scars of self-harm socially construct the subject as abject, and someone to fear. Similarly, Katie recalls three girls burning themselves in Bryn Mawr:

Katie: Well I heard once that three girl chavs burnt themselves on purpose on the breast...just for the fun...

Claudine: Do you think that's true?

Katie: Yeah, because (Charmaine) – like, I didn't see her breast, but she just showed me the bit – it was disgusting....

Claudine: what did they burn themselves with?

Katie: lighters

Claudine: so they hurt themselves on purpose?

Katie: I think they done it, like, you know when you get your fag, and there's like ash on it, and it burns and it leaves like a purple mark, well it was like that...

Claudine: so they did it with cigarettes?

Katie: and lighters...

Claudine: OK...did they say why they did it?

Katie: they just said it was fun

Body modification through self-harm is a little investigated subject in the social sciences, yet it is becoming increasingly common in young peoples' behaviours more widely and was noticeably on the increase in Bryn Mawr during the time of the fieldwork. In terms of a



performance, whether it takes place back stage or front stage, it is, like fashion, a contribution to embodied identity; the body is associated with other bodies through a “behavioural, socially emergent, problematic, variable, and in fact arbitrary, concoction of human interaction.” (Brisett & Edgley 1990:3) Self harm is a form of non-verbal communication and expression, a gesture of control over emotions and the body. The body can be construed not as a fixed essence, but as a site of emotional struggle and process. It has been argued that body technologies are only accepted as natural when they are seen as conforming to social needs and expectations (Wesley 2003). Body modification through self-harm such as branding, burning or ‘slitting’ opposes ideas of social needs, expectations and norms. Self-harming carries a stigma, which can result in a spoiled identity. The word stigma itself was used by the ancient Greeks to refer to signs on the body made by cutting or burning, usually to label people as criminals, slaves or outcasts (Howson 2004: 22). Certainly, some self-harmers carry out ‘slitting’ to create an embodied boundary between themselves and the rest of the society; to self-elect and stigmatise in their difference, as freaks; “Emo kids are attuned to the depths of misery which ordinary mortals cannot begin to fathom...For Emo kid, there is beauty in these dark emotions.” (Mills 2008: 8) Body technologies are ordinarily used to present the self and to understand other people, as discussed previously in relation to clothing, tattoos and body piercings. Self-harm can thus be expressed and understood in a myriad of different ways. For some, the body is used as site of resistance and rebellion; something outside of consciousness and selfhood, over which the individual has control. For others, it is seen as an integral aspect of the self – a self which may be despised and disrespected and thus destroyed. Katz refers to the actively embodied nature of experiencing and doing of emotions, which is “a process of breaking

bodily boundaries, of tears spilling out, rage burning up, and as laughter bursts out, the emphatic involvement of guts as a designated source of the involvement.” (2000: 322) Self harm can thus also be construed of writing emotion on the body, or expressing emotion through the body. Mark’s burning of his arm, his declaration regarding the lack of physical pain felt and the claim that it was ‘cool’, demonstrates a performance of a hardened masculinity, resistant to pain and suffering. Mark projected an attitude which warned others not to mess with him as both a defensive and aggressive manoeuvre. The open visibility and eagerness to discuss the scarring to his arm demonstrated a resistance to pain, and thus reinforced his presentation as an individual not to be messed with. The physical destruction of the girls’ breasts referred to above by a female may indicate a desire to resist femininity and notions of passivity, reclaiming agency and empowerment as a ‘hard’ female, as much as signifying an inscription of oppression, self-hatred or depression.

### **In Between Frames**

Sometimes, criminal activity and anti-social behaviour are a vital part of the production of the drama or overall performance, and moreover, are often created as a *mise-en-scene* for particular audiences, with notably young people ‘acting up’ to gain attention. This viewpoint could potentially be supported by the following field note written after an organised play scheme within the community of Bryn Mawr in order to prevent anti-social behaviour in a school holiday period came to an end:

Fieldnote: 18<sup>th</sup> February 2010 – Outdoor Play Scheme on social housing estate, run by the Youth Offending Services, Communities First and Rainbow Play Schemes.

This day was apparently boring to some of the kids who had been there earlier in the week, and their presence was not sustained – they would keep popping home unlike the previous session when they stayed. So, on the one hand it had novelty value, and then it got boring. Sean & Aaron said they were bored at one stage in the tent. Also, the weather was not as good, and it was extremely cold. For the newcomers though, it was clearly quite exciting. When we were packing up at the end, this was demonstrated in the changes in behaviour. Several young people did not want it to end. There was an altercation between two of the boys which ended in three practitioners having to use restraints. It seemed to be, on the surface, over a bike – one of the guys had kicked a football at another's bike. The owner of the bike over reacted and behaved extremely aggressively – his body language was extremely threatening and he went to attack the other boy, who claimed that it was an accident. The bike owner became very loud, making terrifying roaring sounds and was verbally threatening. As the scene unfolded, a performance space was created as the people around them initially parted, temporarily becoming an audience, before two practitioners moved in and had to use adult restraints on one boy to prevent the fight escalating, and another one had to remove the other lad from the scene. Other young people tried to get involved but were shouted at to get out of the way.

However, the information could be analysed in a different way using the idea of “frame analysis”; on the front stage before a changing audience, the young people involved used the temporal in between zone during the alteration of the “frame” as a release for behaviours otherwise relatively controlled throughout the day by practitioners and volunteers on the play scheme. The idea of framed behaviour has been used by Goffman in the analysis of face to face interaction, in Tannen's (1993) discourse structures, and in Turner's (1982) reflections on ritual events as theatre. Symbolic interactionism highlighted the constitutive nature of social relationships, but Goffman's approach was more structuralist. Claiming that a frame pre-exists an individual, all the individual can do to arrive at a “definition of the situation” is assess; “what the situation ought to be for them and then

act accordingly.” (1974: 1-2) Gitlin refers to frames similarly as; “principles of selection, emphasis and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters.” (1980: 6) Frames can be constructed and reconstructed by actors, and used to understand and respond to the performances of other actors, enabling what Goffman refers to as “guided doing” (1974: 22) yet, regularities in performance stem from repetitive human interactions.

Frames have temporal and spatial elements such as beginnings, endings, boundaries and territories. In this instance, there was an ending to the previous frame of the play scheme, as the new frame of the ordinary reality of the street gradually opened. During this temporal gap between frames, there were also spatial changes as the paraphernalia of the scheme – tents, craft and cooking materials were packed up, the camp fire put out and people began to leave. Goffman refers to playfulness and make believe as “staged fun” (ibid: 52), which in many ways implies a removal from the sense of the ‘real world’; in this case, ordinary street life. It was in the in between space and time of the institutional frame of staged fun and the one of ordinary street life that the anti-social behaviour took place. It could be argued then, that the individuals’ definition of the situation was challenging to arrive at, that there was no opportunity to engage in “guided doing”, and behaviour became chaotic as the young people were adrift between frames. In existentialist terms, these young people were temporarily ‘freed’ from the structuring nature of familiar frames. Via this natural process, they were afforded an increased degree of agency combined with a sense of instability within the self, through which a ‘will to fight’ emerged. Developing Arnold Van Gennep’s

work<sup>3</sup>, Victor Turner (1969) refers to these types of 'in between states' as *liminal*, and potentially as *communitas*. Turner (1969) redefined Van Gennep's concept of the liminal, claiming that the potency of this period was not exclusive to structured rituals, but rather was utilised by a variety of different cultural groups in different contexts. Liminal *personae* known as 'threshold people' "elude and slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space." (Turner 2004: 89) Turner was particularly interested in isolated situations of conflict or crises which resulted in either reconciliation or social separation from the mainstream. Social dramas, according to Turner, initially manifest as a violation of social norms, whether these are modes of behaviours, laws, moral codes, or belief systems. The individual or group violating social norms may act consciously, unconsciously or in a pre-meditated manner. Crucially, Turner states:

Liminality is, of course, an ambiguous state, for social structure, while it inhabits full social satisfaction, gives a measure of finiteness and security; liminality may be for many the acme of insecurity, the breakthrough of chaos into cosmos, disorder into order, than the milieu of creative interhuman or transhuman satisfactions and achievements. Liminality may be...anomie, alienation, angst, the three alpha sisters of many modern myths...it may be represented by the "extreme situations" beloved of existentialist writers...Liminality is both more creative and more destructive than the structural norm. (1982:47)

According to Turner then, it is in the 'betwixt and between' of the liminal world that alternative discourse could manifest otherness and difference and that mainstream

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<sup>3</sup> Prior to becoming 'an adult' the young person inhabits a marginal space where social rules are abandoned and potentiality is given expression in a chaotic manner. Arnold Van Gennep labelled this zone the liminal: it is the threshold into a different identity; a doorway to a different self. In ritual practice this liminal state is characterised by the upturning of social conventions. It is when social rules are disobeyed and norms are discarded; it is carnivalesque - when men 'become' women or animals and when 'anything goes' (1977). For the group in question, this point in the ritual signifies the movement from one social identity to another. The transition works through the liminal potentiality which makes room for the legitimate relief of maintaining social constraints for that period of time.

constraints and social norms could be questioned, resisted and reworked, and identities dissolved and recreated. He originally (1969) relabelled this *communitas*; a place as if between social structures characterised by a lack of order and 'anti-structure.' In this place, differences between people dissolve and there is a sense of equality, where usual social statuses are irrelevant. Turner further developed the idea of *communitas*, identifying it in terms of three forms; spontaneous, ideological and normative. Spontaneous *communitas* is described in existential terms as a "'direct, immediate and total confrontation of human identities'", a deep rather than intense style of personal interaction. 'It has something 'magical' about it.' Subjectively there is in it a feeling of endless power.'" (1982: 47-48) Ideological *communitas* attempts to describe the interactions of spontaneous *communitas*, as the individuals 'step back', separating awareness from action. Turner states that in cases when awareness is separated from action, the quintessential aspect is "'being' together, with 'being' the operative word, not 'doing'" (ibid), as in performative team-work. In spontaneous and ideological *communitas* as well as in liminal zones then, there is no 'guided doing' as such, as Goffman states occurs within frames. Turner's normative *communitas* occurs when "a subculture of group attempts to foster and maintain relationships or spontaneous *communitas* on a more or less permanent basis." (Ibid: 49)

With regard to Goffman's frames then, they provide a useful analytical framework for contextualising behaviours if their interpretation is considered in light of Turner's definitions of liminality and *communitas*. Whereas Goffman's theoretical framework is useful for analysing normative everyday behaviour, Turner's is best directed at behaviours which transgress social norms; performances which deviate from everyday situations. States

suggests that; “Goffman’s typical performer is a single person moving in a world infested with behavioural dos and don’ts; Turner’s performers are usually disturbed social groups caught in the agony of competing political claims.” (1996: 8) Individual anti-social behaviour can emerge then, as an existential performance in the liminal zones between frames as a response to the lack of structuring principles available within the surrounding frames, and through making a ‘definition of the situation’ challenging via a lack of obvious guidance in doing. Anti-social behaviour involving two or more people in such a space, could be defined as spontaneous *communitas*, in which rather than involving guided doing as such, may simply be more a case of ‘being together’ in chaos. When anti-social behaviour becomes repetitive within a group, normative *communitas* has arisen; this is the place where social norms can be played with to the point of permanent transformation. In between frame performances then, are not only re-inventions of the self, but also spaces in which values diverge depending on the observers present.

### **Facebook to Facebook interaction**

Goffman’s analysis of impression management as face to face interaction can also be applied to peoples’ use of social networking sites and text messaging, which particularly among the young people in Bryn Mawr, constitutes daily aspects of social interaction.

In the past, particularly in the years leading up to the dispersal order in 2007, young people in Bryn Mawr made use of the social networking sites *Bebo* to engage in individual and group identity construction. This is one of the online spaces in which the male members of the Mawr Mob represented themselves to gangs and young people outside of the neighbourhood and girls both within and outside the group. Here, they used the websites to attempt to develop a reputation of 'hardness' and brutal masculinity amongst an audience of young people, and also co-ordinated meetings to enact anti-social behaviour. The gang used various slogans, which were also used as graffiti tags:

Mawr Mob 4 life mutherfuckas

Mawr Mob peeps 4 life add us expesially if u r an Mawr Mob an remember dont fuk wit Mawr Mob

The feedback posted on the site by the members of the audience displayed a lack of admiration for their endeavours and defensive and threatening responses were given to the disparaging comments:

Comment on website: hahaha what a joke. MAWR MOB ?is that meant ot be an abbreviation of Bryn Mawr? i got one for you, definition of confusion....fathers day in Bryn Mawr, walkin round thinkin ya bad blad, remember you lot live in tents an majority have no future so to make up for this you make silly websites 'bigging' yourselves up. spraying Mawr Mob 4 life all over the place really does you loads of favours.get the public vote innit....judged

Response to comment on website: hey judge r u dissin Mawr Mob ? cuz if u r id wtch ur fkin bk u freak so wt if we go around sprayin Mawr Mob 4 lyf it jst shows dat we respect wer we live der aint nufin rng wid dat! nd if u gt nefin else 2 say bwt Mawr Mob y dnt u cum 2 Mawr Mob nd say 2 our faces instead of online wer we cnt gt u!

Comment on website: lmao wanabe bad bois run wales lol, u lot got fucked up brv and dont even try ad hype it back to me lil bois. ders like.. 4 people in yur lil set dat acctually look like ther something lol



Comment on website: u guys r all chavz ! poor u =/ c'min emo it up a bit  
yeh ? ha

However, despite the ridicule from some of the observers or audience, several of the members of these online groups had already been convicted of violent crimes and were later convicted of more serious crimes, including actual bodily harm, grievous bodily harm with intent, and burglary. One in particular who was detained for violent crime, utilised images related to violence and killing on his profile, such as handguns:

BANG

gun shots!

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Of the sites which still exist, even the site which was developed for young members of the group displayed similar images and words threatening death:

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watch owt or ill kill yaz all

The description of this site acted as a confession of their behaviour, or at least intentions:

these are all the lads who come from Bryn Mawr accept one of them there we always cause trouble n other shit we have a good sense of music like hiip hop n rap mostly.

Robert described how online social networking was responsible for much of the anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhood when it was at its peak prior to 2007:

There was a chav culture and I managed to break into their sites a couple of times, we found one of the ringleaders who was engineering all this, he never left his house. Yeah? Obviously, you could say he had mental health problems or was all this JUST because he was a bad child? But he engineered all this. Halloween was horrendous; it was like Beirut. There were people from Cardiff, Birmingham, and all this was engineered on Facebook and all these other sites to get more people up here.

Claudine: So, they were using social networking sites to organise crime?

Robert: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah.

Claudine: To get people from other cities or towns?

Robert: Yeah, that's right. Erm, it happened before at Llan-y-Badrig on the football pitch on Halloween, and then the Summer when we launched the Watch, it just became unbelievable...

Claudine: So do these sites still exist now?

Robert: They do, but to a different degree, they chop and change so often, they change the password, codes, but they're still up and running.

Claudine: So you say there was one person who you think was behind it all?

Robert: Yep, we did. And eventually I stepped forward and lodged a complaint, he went to court, he was cautioned, and I've got to be honest, since then, the anti-social behaviour has decreased by 80%.

Currently, *Facebook* is where the focused staging of identity takes place, with peripheral linked websites such as *YouTube* enhancing identity creation, performance and maintenance. As there is only one main profile page on *Facebook*, with limited visibility settings, these identities are prone to becoming more stable than those in everyday face-to-face interactions, as only one face can be used for multiple audiences, which may include friends, acquaintances, and family members. Goffman would refer to this as a 'cynical' performance because an individual cannot adequately delineate and isolate the audience that they formulate their performance for. However, multiple identities can be presented through the online chat mechanisms on *Facebook*, and this is often where both intimacy and bullying occur. Katie describes how identity is managed differentially according to the use of the more public profile page, and in the private messaging service or chat mechanism:

Claudine: What sort of things do they talk about on chat?

Katie: Just like, what a week they have had and what drinks and stuff...they don't put them as statuses 'cause they don't want the police to see, but they do talk about stuff on chat...and a lot of rumours go round as well...

Claudine: So, some fights might be caused by what people say on Facebook chat?

Katie: Yeah!

Here, Mead's 'I' and 'me' is almost caricatured, as *Facebook* becomes a digitalised, virtual version of the looking glass self. Mike revealed how chat messenger was used to make racist remarks and threats towards him:

Do you remember the rugby game England versus Wales, when England won? Well, chat messenger on Facebook popped up, and the conversation began like this:

Lloyd: WALES

Mike: LOST

Lloyd: Go fuck off back to where you came from. Watch your back.

Mike: What ya gonna do?

I wasn't scared because I didn't think they would do anything in real life. But the thing is, lots of fights start on Facebook.

Cyber-bullying can take place either blatantly on the front stage in front of potentially a wide audience; on an individual's profile pages or behind the scenes on the chat mechanism with one spectator. Usually, bullying takes place in discrete ways behind the scenes. Similarly, young people reported that bullying and anti-social behaviours could manifest themselves through text messaging. These performances begin to take on new meanings as live action face to face interactions become mediated through technologies.

Peggy Phelan describes the ontology of performance as grounded in the present. Performances are live one-offs, never to be repeated in precise terms; "Performance honours the idea that a limited number of people in a specific time/space frame can have an experience of value which leaves no visible trace afterward." (1993: 149) Social interactions in everyday life are performances which are generally not consciously entrenched in mass

media or in what Adorno (1991) referred to as the *Culture Industry*. Yet in twenty first century life in the West, the prevalence of mobile camera phones can capture spontaneous live performative social interactions, which always have the potential to be uploaded onto the internet and go 'viral'. Similarly, both private and public surveillance can capture events as they occur, which can be replayed at a later date. Some young people deliberately alter their behaviour when they are aware of being observed by surveillance:

Bryn: When I see a CCTV camera I act up for it.

Social life can thus no longer be viewed as series of ontologically pristine isolated performances, and its traces are potentially to be found everywhere from mobile phone inboxes to wider social media sharing sites such as *Facebook* and *YouTube*. Behaviours can become modified by an insidious awareness of the increasing potential to record them; in a sense they can become more artificial, more conscious as performances. They can become "camera-ready", staged and engineered to 'give off' certain characteristics, to display personas, to create a mood. Often these performances and images are conscious reproductions of those of others – mimetic - as individuals decide what aspect of the human condition they wish to represent at any given time.

## **Mimesis**

To ponder mimesis is to become sooner or later caught, like the police and the modern State with their fingerprinting devices, in sticky webs of copy and contact, image and bodily involvement of the perceiver in the image, a complexity we too easily elide as non-mysterious, with our facile use of

terms such as identification, representation, expression and so forth – terms which simultaneously depend upon and erase all that is powerful and obscure in the network of associations conjured by the notion of the mimetic. (Taussig 1993: 21)

Mimesis originates from the original Greek word of the same – *mimesis*; meaning to imitate. Pre-Platonic thought was inclined to underline the representational dimensions of mimesis and its sense of imitation, representation, depiction. There has always been historically, a link between mimesis and art and performance. Gebauer and Wulf (1995: 316) allude to the embodied essence of mimesis by locating its roots in oral traditions in which gesture, sound and rhythm would have been key. Mimesis has been a focal part of ritual since the onset of human culture. Halliwell (2002: 15) describes the relationship between mimesis and five different groups of phenomena as follows:

First, visual resemblance (including figurative works of art); second, behavioural emulation/imitation; third, impersonation including dramatic enactment; fourth, vocal or musical production of significant or impressive structures of sound; fifth, metaphysical conformity as in the Pythagorean belief reported by Aristotle, that the material world is a mimesis of the immaterial domain of numbers.

Mimetic behaviour was viewed as the representation of something with an underlying authenticity, and Plato believed that mimesis was intrinsically inferior in that it consists of imitations which will always be subordinate or secondary to the original. Classical mimesis therefore suggests that there is probably a true identity underneath the mask. This idea is inherent in both Mead's concepts of the 'I' and 'me', and in Goffman's ideas around the protected self and the desired self. Irigaray refers to this idea as mimesis imposed. Aristotle's view was that mimesis helps humans learn about the 'true' nature of the world; hence mimesis constitutes reality through creating a fictional world of representations. Elin

Diamond's book *Unmaking Mimesis* (1997) hinges on the argument that Platonic mimesis is either essentially masculinist, universal and 'saming', or feminine, fluid and shape-shifting which of course posits a threat to Plato's ideal unity of the self. Diamond claims that mimesis is hence "impossibly double" and that the terms mimesis and identification are "inseparable, the first fulfilling the second." (Diamond 1997: 112). She discusses mimesis in relation to identity and identification at length:

Indeed all identity claims are propped on the hierarchical structure of classical mimesis: identity is imagined to be the truthful origin or model that grounds the subject, shapes the subject, and endows her with a continuous sense of self-sameness or being. Identification on the other hand, is a passionate mimesis, a fantasy assimilation not locatable in time or responsive to political ethics. Identifications can only be 'recognised' and narrated from temporal distance...Drawing another onto one-self, projecting oneself onto another, identification creates sameness not with the self but another...Aggressivity, rivalry, and alienation...identification is trespass, denying the other's difference by assimilating her behaviour, taking her place, killing her off. (Diamond 1997:106)

Mimesis thus exists both for the performer and spectator or audience simultaneously. For Rene Girard (1965; 1978), whose mimetic theory has roots in Hegelian thought, mimesis is embroiled with social relationships based on rivalry, although he does not identify gender as the primary ground for violence in the same way that Diamond does. Girard sees it as a more general issue; if everything depends upon human relationships, then they, as imitation, will give rise to desire. Girard argued that mimetic desire is different from other forms of mimesis in that it gives rise to violence, and that mimetic rivalry is essentially at the core of social, political and economic struggles.

Michael Taussig's (1993) discussion of mimesis in *Mimesis and Alterity* is influenced both by Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno's ideas, in which mimesis is conceived of as a pre-language adaptive behaviour that allows humans to make themselves similar to their surrounding environments through incorporation and play; accordingly the perceptual aspect of mimesis is highlighted. This relates to the point made in Chapter Five in relation to Mead's (1962 [1934]) suggestion that children and young people learn by mimesis, or through playing the role of others and incorporating aspects into the self. Taussig explains mimesis as follows, "To get hold of something by means of its likeness. Here is what is crucial in the resurgence of the mimetic faculty, namely the two-layered notion of mimesis that is involved – a copying or imitation, and a palpable, sensuous, connection between the very body of the perceiver and the perceived." (1993: 21). Through embodied acts of mimesis (for example a young person copying another's behaviour or style of dress), the distinction between the self and other becomes permeable and malleable. Rather than dominating nature, mimesis as mimicry allows a sensory experience of the world in which the Cartesian categories of subject and object are not fixed, but rather pliable; strangely enough, difference is created by making oneself similar to something else by imitation:

Pulling you this way and that, mimesis plays this trick of dancing between the very same and the very different. An impossible but necessary, indeed everyday affair, mimesis registers both sameness and difference, of being like and of being Other. Creating stability from this instability is no small task, yet all identity formation is engaged in this habitually bracing activity in which the issue is not so much staying the same, but maintaining sameness through alterity. (Taussig 1993: 129)

Taussig is also fully aware of the potential power inherent in mimesis; "Once the mimetic has sprung into being, a terrifically ambiguous power is established; there is born the power



to represent the world, yet that same power is a power to falsify, mask and pose.” (1993: 43).

Performance as mimesis with political intent wants to direct the audience to experience blame or critical empowerment; it desires to implicate the audience in processes of complicity, recognition, or transgression. Irigaray celebrates the liberatory potential of mimesis by invoking political intention.

### **Irigaray's Mimesis**

Most people are other people. Their thoughts are someone else's opinions, their lives a mimicry, their passions a quotation.

Oscar Wilde (1905)

More so than men and boys, women and girls are rarely without exception, in Oscar Wilde's terms, 'other people'. This is not and likely never was a situation of choice, but one that has nonetheless reproduced itself repeatedly. For women wear 'imposed' masks, those that they have been/are forced to wear, in addition to those they choose to adorn themselves with; "...woman is submitted to all kinds of trials: she undergoes multiple and contradictory identifications, she suffers transformations of which she is not aware, since she has no identity..." (Irigaray 1992: 2). The lack of authenticity in female subjecthood and the representation of the feminine are subjects which concern Irigaray in both her earlier and

later work. Irigaray's particular ideas about mimesis form a strategy for both philosophy and living. Many interpreters of Irigaray's *oeuvre* have discussed the related concepts of masquerade and mimesis in depth. Masquerade is a false version of femininity deriving from a woman's acceptance of man's projected desire for her to be his other, and allows her to experience desire in his terms, as opposed to her own. Mimesis is the strategy Irigaray (1985: 76) utilises to transform masquerade into a method for the seizure and occupation of the feminine:

One must assume the feminine role deliberately. Which means already to convert a form of subordination into an affirmation, and thus begin to thwart it...To play with mimesis is thus, for a woman, to try to recover the place of her exploitation by discourse, without allowing herself to be simply reduced to it. It means to resubmit herself – inasmuch as she is on the side of the “perceptible” of “matter” – to “ideas”, in particular ideas about herself, that are elaborated in/by a masculine logic, but so as to make “visible”, by an effect of playful repetition, what was supposed to remain invisible: the cover-up of a possible operation of the feminine in language. It also means “to unveil” the fact that, if women are such good mimics, it is because they are not simply resorbed in this function. They also remain elsewhere.

The mimetic strategy is used not only to bring about discursive change, but also to alter the location of the subject of expression and to rediscover, or unveil, a feminine generic identity, as *women-among-themselves* or a *people*. (Whitford 1991: 136). This is not to dismiss the heterogeneous nature of the feminine in a complex social field, but rather to lay the foundations for an exploration of this by concretizing the notion of a subject position in the feminine, as different from a female subject position in masculine discourse. In acting as a non-participant or participant observer, the audience-self as researcher can view behaviour and action as theatre. Interview narratives become scripts for continued re-reading and listening in order to locate representations of female subjectivity in both

masculine and feminine. As a female researcher, it is possible thus to play with mimesis, but also to *remain elsewhere*. In an embodied social field, this call for a creation of a female specificity; "...implies that the female body is not to remain the object of men's discourse or their various arts but that it become the object of a female subjectivity experiencing and identifying itself. Such research attempts to suggest to women a morpho-logic that is appropriate to their bodies. It's aimed at the male subject too, inviting him to redefine himself as a body with a view to exchanges between sexed subjects." (1993: 59)

Field note, May 2010:

The older ones were encouraged to paint on large pieces of board. I was curiously watching and encouraging many just getting on with designs to do with their neighbourhood, hoping as researcher to gain some secret important knowledge about how they perceived the place where they lived – it was an opportunity to produce legitimate graffiti. At one point, one of the teenage girls who looked like what young people would describe as a swot or nerd, glasses, hair up in ponytail, normal 'straight' clothes etc – suddenly walked straight up to the boards and drew penises all over them and wrote GAY in big letters. One of the play workers – an older male – looked completely broken at this point. He went up to them and sighed – the art project had been ruined. It all had to be thrown away. Some of the other kids were upset, others laughed hysterically at what she had done. I had even my own judgement questioned – I would not have expected her to do such an act – my own prejudices were revealed to me. I would have expected this from one of the boys, as I had often seen them behaving in an overly sexualised manner and mock each other about 'being gay'.

This subversive performance disrupted both the microcosmic social order of the play scheme and the wider social order of the neighbourhood in a number of ways. Firstly, the sudden interruption of the ongoing performance by the 'artists' triggered a moment of departure into anti-social behaviour, performed by a 'straightedge' female, which also raised questions about gender norms and sub-cultural affiliations. Although the painting of boards was 'legitimized graffiti', when a young person actively engaged herself with painting

offensive graffiti on top of the other art, she received differing responses, which revealed the onlookers' adherence to particular values about behaviour, including my own, as researcher. Secondly, the nature of her destruction called into question the irony of the idea of painting 'legitimate graffiti'. Finally, and most unexpectedly perhaps, as a sexuate being - a female - her action deconstructed normative sexuality in the masculine by adding the word GAY to her repetitive and derogatory cartoon images of erect penises. The act could thus be positioned in Lacan's concept of the hysteric, in that it lacked control but made a clear point of resistance to social norms and predominantly perhaps to one of the aims of the scheme - to prevent young people causing trouble in the neighbourhood in the school holiday. This accomplished act of enunciation; its timing, context and the manner in which it was carried out, delivered an insulting blow to a number of people. In this respect, it could almost have been located in the realm of mimesis in that she imitated a genuine graffiti artist, and simultaneously ridiculed the phallus.

However, even when the female 'character' is central to the unfolding social events, it is unusual for the audience to be invited to and to willingly share in her perspective, or to be genuinely concerned with her thoughts, observations or reactions; often the audience acts simply as a voyeur. There are usually other driving forces which rob women of their subjectivities both singularly and as a collective - for example the way a narrative may be constructed around the idea of the demystification or fetishization of the female by a male (see, for example Messerschmidt 2011). This thieving effectively denies the representation of feminine consciousness any meaningful insight - even to a female reader (especially in direct relation to embodiment) via the rupture inherent in the male researcher's

interpretation, and therefore the subject remains in masculinist discourse. In Irigaray's words; "Gagged by your discourse, made rigid by your judgements, covered over with attributes of your choosing, what can you still expect from me?" (1992: 51)

Jody Miller views the gender issue in relation to criminality in terms of "*situated action* or *situated accomplishment*" as opposed to a mere role individuals play (2002: 434, see also Miller 2001:7). Similarly, Laidler and Hunt discuss femininity in gangs as something to "accomplished" (2001: 656-78). To consider femininity as something which is/to be successfully achieved or as a feat or talent in this manner is suggestive of a deeper form of engaged performance, something which is actively and consciously 'done', rather than the donning of a mask. However, it also engages women in processes which may exile them from themselves, or the possibilities of the *elsewhere* referred to by Irigaray. Miller goes to great lengths to theorise the concepts of masculinity and femininity attributed to the biological sex differences. Following Connell (1987), Messerschmidt (1995) and Hood-Williams (2001), she constructs an argument which culminates in her conclusion that a dualistic model of gender has limitations for understanding gender and crime. Miller is fearful that a 'natural' gender approach will reproduce inequality, and she argues for a process which allows for multiple differences within a structured action approach. (2002: 455-6). However, in looking for plural forms of femininity and masculinity which need not be attached to male or female bodies, Miller slips into the mire of the 'other of the same', a term which Irigaray (2011) uses to describe Simone de Beauvoir's feminism, along with others who promote equality at the expense of difference. The feminine as a *horizontal other* must be allowed to speak directly otherwise, she will be appropriated by the masculine as a half-life:

And if she is granted the life of appearance, it will be a darkling affair. Underground shadow theatre, lunar reflection of the star that makes everything light and fertile. A lack-luster double of the self-duplication that man carries within him, his “soul” when “she” doesn’t stand in the way with her “body.”

(Irigaray 1985:345)

The darkling affair and the underground shadow theatre represent the dark marginal areas of the stage. When the stage is taken by an actor, it lights up. The darkness is always behind, a shadow. The actor makes an entry into that lit space, proceeding to being in the moment of presence, from the dark. The performative space is the space in which one is constantly moving; there is intentionality, the idea of futurity and becoming. The future and front stage, the place into which one steps is brightly lit, it is destiny. Becoming visible is becoming present and coming to life as one comes to light.

Meaning is not inherent but is created through the process. Performance does not assume that there exists an underlying reality, but it is authentic because it is present; “Performance conjures up the precarious ‘emptiness’ of the now.” (Thrift 2008:135) Heidegger understood ‘now’ as the time of being, a space to open up to the future. Stepping into presence as the stage is lit may be a moment in which being and doing simultaneously come into play. Performance is a site of claims to a particular group identity but also a site of a performative recreating of shifting identities. There is a particular order and disorder in performance with fluctuations between. Spontaneous disordered mimesis can demonstrate the crisis of representation of the sexes and reveal stereotypical perceptions of the other and order:

Field Note, November, 2009:

A group of boys were larking about in front of the chapel, engaging in ‘anti-social behaviour’; shouting, name calling and fighting. Some had

evidently found some discarded clothes in the chapel. One boy had found a girl's straw hat and put it on. As soon as he put the hat on, his demeanour changed. He started strutting about with his hand on his hip. Another lad put on a little girl's tight skirt and white cardigan – both too small for him. He also began to behave differently, skipping and prancing about, pouting his lips. Their exaggerated behaviour revealed how the boys thought girls behaved, moved and gestured. The other boys could not find anything to dress up in to join. They decided to chase the boys and rip the girl's clothes off them and were quite aggressive in their behaviour. I was left wondering whether they were partially convinced by the performance and were enacting violence towards the perceived feminine or whether they wanted to strip the boys of their perceived femininity which they were excluded from enacting, as if it posed a threat to the masculinity of the group. Or, maybe they were just annoyed because there was a limited amount of props available...

However this event is interpreted, Irigaray's (1991: 107) claim that woman is a "replica that has already been mastered" is pertinent. Mimesis is risky because it can reinforce social norms, or transgress them. It is therefore an unstable space, but a space of possibility. In this manner, and significantly, it is as similarly unstable as the idea of femininity "Femininity lends itself to this: takes on everything attributed to or imposed upon it. Is it anything but a place of substitution between? Substitute, a vacant blind or canvas for productions and reproductions." (1991: 111)

## **Summary**

Goffman has been criticised for his lack of attention to power. (Denzin 2003: 129-30). This was referred to in more detail in Chapter Three and will be returned to again in Chapter Eight. In *The Jargon of Authenticity*, Adorno (2003) similarly criticised the existentialists for a

failure to engage with social power, and Irigaray drew attention to this failure specifically in terms of sexual difference, and an interrogation of the dualist essence of discourse and hence contemporary society, through the idea of the 'other body'. Therefore, the body is a means to address the manner in which social power (or a lack thereof) plays out. The body offers up a poetics of ennui, despair, anger, and of anomie. The body and embodiment both grounds the presentation of self in social situations and provides a progressive continuity of experience as the individual enters and leaves diverse scenarios. It therefore provides an anchor for both 'doing' and 'being'; the body *is* being and doing. Identity is thus both a lived experience and a doing of montage; the social actor's craft of adjustment to the fluidity that characterises one's world.

There is an asymmetry in the embodiment of performance; it is dualistic, with what occurs in between as perhaps simply liminal, or a bridge between states. Outward expressions as performance on the front stage and the behaviour in the hidden back stage are carried out through the same body. Social action can be scripted without needing to be performed. Individuals regularly achieve success in others believing that they will carry out acts which are never actually done, such as threats of violence. No matter how genuine and well constructed the intention, there is also always the possibility that performances will fail. Sometimes performing and hiding effects occur at the same time. When research looks underneath and behind the self-consciously represented self, fresh ethical subjects of concern arise; all represented accomplishments are produced from a behind that is kept away from legitimate vision; "This duplicity of the veil has perhaps never received her



interpretation. It is content to stick with what covers, masks, defers seeming (*le paraître*)". (Irigaray 1991: 116)

Performance is emergent and situationally contingent, and defies concepts of fixed subjectivity, authenticity and realism and instead embraces a creative process. This is emblematic of a becoming – a poesis. It is the liminality felt just before stepping onto the lit stage, a threshold. It is within the possibility of *communitas*, the existential search for authenticity in a society of empty signifiers, that the oppressed and disadvantaged find personal and group power within the wider realm of a lack of social power. Performances are thus part of an assemblage of selves, and being human is about authentic anchoring moments in the maelstrom of doubt and panic of postmodernity. "The quest for authenticity is thus rooted in the individual's attempts to create a sense of identity through creative decision-making." (Green 2011: 77) Performance is skilled and the complicity of the wider environment is crucial to performance's success. Generally speaking, people work together to protect the faces of others, as well as their own, relentlessly checking and fixing presentations. Further, the audience has the potential for becoming in their assessment of the performance; "in the act of looking, the spectator engages with her own temporality." (Diamond 1997: 53) Performance can be mimesis – in many senses of the term. The question remains – is there an authentic reality underlying it? Do the people of Bryn Mawr simply perform their community, and their identities, whether through compliance with social norms or through a rejection of them? Baudrillard states; "When the real is no longer what it used to be, nostalgia assumes its full meaning. There is a proliferation of myths of origin and signs of reality; of second-hand truth, objectivity and authenticity. There is an

escalation of the true, of the lived experience...And there is a panic-stricken reproduction of the real and the referential.” (1983: 12-13)

Performances are given another layer of the illusion of authenticity as they are recorded, or as interventions take place. What is written; the authority of the social worker, the police officer’s notes makes these performances more authentic and provides in Goffman’s terms, a ‘working consensus.’ Money and resources have been invested by the state in challenging these behaviours; making them more real, leaving traces, guaranteeing authenticity through context and association maintains the dominant order. Acknowledging the ‘protected self’, or Mead’s ‘me’ behind the scenes as more authentic than the performance opening on the front stage is likely to be politically problematic in relation to maintaining the social order, depending on the location of the undesirable behaviour.

However, within the realm of the presentation of selves always lies the possibility of emancipation and originality. As Shanks and Pearson put it; “performance is...not hermetically sealed, but a devised world...it is a *locale* of cultural intervention and innovation, a *place* of experiment, claim, conflict, negotiation, transgression: a *place* where preconceptions, expectations and critical faculties may be dislocated or confounded; where extra-daily occurrences and experiences and changes in status are possible; a *place* where things may still be at risk – beliefs, classifications, lives.” (2004: 27, my italics).

Stepping out, off the page, into the sensual world. And then our arrows of desire rewrite the speech.

(Kate Bush 2011)

*Rather than being in this two dimensional world, she's free, let loose to touch things, feel the ground under her feet, the sunsets, just how incredibly sensual a world it is.*

(Kate Bush 2011)

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **Re-imagining the criminogenic space**

#### **Introduction**

It is somewhat arbitrary to try to dissociate the effective practice of freedom by people, the practice of social relations, and the spatial distributions in which they find themselves. If they are separated, they become impossible to understand.

(Foucault 1984)

Although there is a substantial body of discourse relating to the topics of space and place within philosophy and the social sciences, there is a limited amount in criminology that explicitly adopt the ideas of the 'spatial turn' embraced more readily by sociologists and anthropologists, and even less that explicitly bring embodiment to the table. However, there has recently been tentative steps taken towards establishing a more spatially informed criminology that does not centre on the concerns of administrative criminology and infusing criminological understandings of space that are more attuned to cultural geography (Hayward 2012; Campbell, 2013). There have also been more explicit attempts (Hayward, 2004; Young 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2011a, 2011b), since Hayward first made

reference to the loss of possibilities for understanding crime and place that the Chicago School embodied in their spatial studies of the city. (2004: 155) More recently, Hayward (2012: 9) has explicitly criticised the lack of in-depth attention to space in criminology; “while criminology has a long tradition of considering key issues such as power and meaning, too often these analyses have only peripherally engaged with issues relating to spatiality.”

Instead, many geographies of crime have focused on using statistics to isolate, map and situate criminogenic areas, maintaining the Enlightenment idea that space and place contain objective reality and that simply put, crimes are inevitably going to be committed within certain areas. Pat O’Malley (2003 [1996]) stated that situational crime prevention was one of the fastest growing techniques of crime control in terms of looking at potential the opportunities for crime as risk management or behaviour management, rather than its causal or biographical reasons. He also alludes to how risk management in terms of “defensible space” can conveniently be discursively allied to the political agendas of both the Left and Right, which of course includes Community Safety agendas already discussed at length in previous chapters. As already discussed in Chapter Four, policy such as the Anti-Social Behaviour Act, and related policies such as the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 has heralded a change in the techniques of governmentality itself; from the governing of crime directly through criminal justice to what Garland calls a “responsibilization strategy” whereby state authorities use the help of other agencies and individuals to control conduct, such as in the creation of

dispersal zones. This has been called “government at a distance”, or “remote governing” (Rose 1989).

Garland (2003: 459) has also drawn attention to the role of administrative criminologies which have invented the idea of the *criminogenic situation* for the purposes of policy-makers and governing. Known as “hotspots of crime”, these are always imagined in terms of space, place and time; “unsupervised car-parks, town squares late at night, deserted neighbourhoods, poorly-lit streets, shopping malls, football games, bus stops and subway stations.” (Ibid.) Crime figures can be fairly arbitrarily constructed in relation to what exactly constitutes a “crime hotspot”. Under Part 4 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, the police were given powers to disperse two or more people if anti-social behaviour is prevalent in designated areas, and within these areas to impose curfews on young people under sixteen years of age. An area may be designated as a dispersal zone for six months, which is a renewable term, in consultation with the local authority if there has been a persistent problem. In some cases, this may just mean that there have been two or more incidents of anti-social behaviour occurring there, which are unrelated to the group being dispersed. A person has not committed an offence because they have been dispersed, but failure to comply is an offence. The 2003 act also includes the power to remove any person under sixteen to their home if they are seen out in a public space designated as a dispersal zone between 9pm and 6am and unaccompanied by an adult.

A police constable may disperse two or more people simply because their presence or behaviour has resulted, or might potentially result in a member of the public being “harassed, intimidated, alarmed or distressed.” Dispersal orders can therefore potentially criminalise youthful behaviour on the grounds that it may upset some adults. Young people, who may be gathered in smallish groups, simply ‘hanging out’ can be identified as being in the “pre-offending stage” – in other words - they haven’t actually done anything anti-social or criminal, but simply might. So, rather than actually protecting neighbourhoods, the policy has been more geared towards the cleansing, or sanitising of public space, and certain social groups such as young people have undoubtedly been targeted. (Walsh 2002)

Research to date on the lasting effect of dispersal orders, preliminary findings have demonstrated that in cases where there has been a genuine reason for them, crime and anti-social behaviour have merely been displaced to other areas, although of course, police stats show up to 83% reductions in crime in the designated area during the dispersal order, which on the surface makes the policy look like a success (Moore 2008, Squires 2008). But it must not be forgotten, that during the period of the dispersal order, there is also an increased police presence in the area, which obviously acts as a deterrent.

From a Foucauldian spatial governmentality perspective, we can analyse the formal crime control field as what Garland refers to as a field of power relations and subjectifications, underpinned by ‘governmental rationalities’ (2003: 456). These are the manners of reasoning that are “embodied in a particular set of practices.” (Ibid.) Embedded in this rationale behind the formation of safer communities is the idea of creating so-called safe

spaces, and removing abject people and objects such as normal waste in a consumer society – litter, abandoned vehicles and so on, who or which might symbolize or embody social disorder. This process produces a sensorial feeling of security and spatial hygiene rather than actually preventing crime. Spatial governmentality operates by excluding disruptive social groups from specific places, as opposed to using measures of containment, correction or reform. Power relations between age groups can be seen as implicated in these processes, and the effects of Dispersal Orders have resulted in relations being damaged between different sections of communities and neighbourhoods, which have further exacerbated problems. The policy has been used as merely a ‘sticking plaster’ over perceived problems (Crawford and Lister 2007), and it has been observed that Dispersal Orders simply move groups of young people elsewhere.

### **Matter out of *place***

Bryn Mawr was the subject of a dispersal order in 2006, prior to my fieldwork period. Young people on the streets and in the park at night were seen as “matter out of place”, both spatially and temporally. There was a general consensus amongst practitioners in the area that the dispersal order had a negative impact on everybody except for a few people who were satisfied at the results. The reality was that young people simply went elsewhere, and became increasingly isolated from any sense of community. It also exacerbated relations between young people and longer term residents, with many young people referring to elderly neighbours in derogatory terms. Anthony, a youth worker with the Youth Offending Team, stated that the Dispersal Order was a joke in that all it did was move young people into town. Stuart believed that, whilst it placated a certain small group of residents, it put



some young people at higher risk in relation to more serious safety and offending issues in the main town. Lucy, whose boyfriend was one of the Mawr Mob, and who had been in trouble with the police on several occasions, told me that young people just started going into town instead after the Dispersal Order:

Everyone goes to town now. We just go to house parties. Everyone smokes weed now... and then on weekends, probably just things like speed or pills, I don't think like coke and stuff, as I doubt people would be able to afford that, just cheap things... When you go to like parties, house parties, you see younger people too and you're like woah! You didn't think that they would be drinking. Even in pubs sometimes you see people and you're like, how did they get in and stuff but everyone has like fake ID now. Personally myself I would prefer to go to house parties, I don't know why, it is good to go out but it is just when you go out too much, it is just boring, I would rather just stay in and drink. You see quite a lot of violence with drink but most people go to town don't they? At night and like at weekends if they're drinking, even if it is people from Bryn Mawr, they just want to go to town to go to parties and stuff now.

In areas where there are people living close to each other, symbolic boundaries are usually put in place where there are weak spatial ones. This idea was discussed at length in Chapter Four in relation to the concept of the incomer, stranger and the relations between different estates. When these boundaries are continually pushed against, they reach a breaking point or crisis and often more direct measures in terms of re-negotiating territorial space have to be taken. In the previous chapters, the themes of strangeness, and abjection were discussed in depth and in relation to identity, community and *communitas*. Strangeness and abjection sit at the extreme poles of an already existing alterity between self and other(s). In particular, some social groups such as young people can be allied to a set of behaviours and their material manifestations which are seen as undesirable or abject. Sibley (1995:100) noted that:

Object relations theorists have identified the simultaneous feelings of repulsion and desire which attach to stereotyped others. Stereotypes, however, often include elements of place so that discrepancy or acceptance can depend on the degree to which a group stereotype matches the place in which it is located. A group can be in the 'wrong place' if the stereotype locates it elsewhere.

However, there is also a very real element of fear underling motives behind the spatial exclusion of others, as discussed in relation to the stranger in Chapter Four, and to abjection in Chapter Five. Tuan (1979) has pondered over the phenomenological essence of fear and place:

What are landscapes of fear? They are the almost infinite manifestations of the forces for chaos, natural and human. Forces for chaos being omnipresent, human attempts to control them are also omnipresent. In a sense, every human construction - whether mental or material – is a component in a landscape of fear because it exists to contain chaos.

The research for this thesis typically revealed on the surface a dialectic between experiences of uses of space and place which were based on fear, and another which was based on the ambivalent or engaged use of place for leisure or ordinary everyday use. However, many young peoples' experiences of places within Bryn Mawr were more complex than that and despite the fact that young people were likely to be the most stigmatised and feared group in Bryn Mawr, they often described experiencing fear themselves, even in relation to places that they continued to use for leisure such as the parks or woods.

During the fieldwork period, I was lucky enough to be invited to spend a day with two youth workers on the estates at Bryn Mawr during an Easter holiday. Additionally, I spent several

days as a volunteer youth worker on community projects led by Communities First. I also conducted a mobile interview, which lasted several hours with a youth worker from Communities First, who provided me with an insight into the places young people went to, for example, when they were playing truant from school, or when they were in a state of distress. These valuable experiences provided me with knowledge, albeit a partial one, of how young people use places in around Bryn Mawr for leisure and play. I was also given confidential access to a film made by the young people in conjunction with a local theatre and film organisation about the place where they lived, which showed the audience footage of places they enjoyed going to in Bryn Mawr, and detailed their memories and experiences of them.

In addition to this, I focused a large section of interview questions on issues regarding experiences and perceptions of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in relation to space and place. These were directed at all participants in the study, and included questions of which particular places were seen as safe or dangerous, and at what particular times. As data emerged, it became clear that peoples' experiences of different places within Bryn Mawr were not just based on visual experiences, but rather, were multi-sensory and distinctly embodied.

### **Body/space**

Following the theoretical and philosophical approaches of the last chapter, this section of the thesis will combine embodied symbolic interactionist approaches, notably those of Goffman, with an existentialist phenomenology of the flesh, after Merleau-Ponty (2002 [1962]) and Luce Irigaray. For Merleau-Ponty (2002: 162), the body is the beginning of space and place:

I am not in space and time, nor do I conceive space and time; I belong to them, my body combines with them and includes them... the synthesis of both time and space is a task that always has to be performed afresh.

Merleau-Ponty draws attention to the fundamental connection between body, space and time. He positions the body at the foreground of any understandings we might have of space and place. There are few lacunae between the body and space and place; they are simultaneously saturated with perceptions, emotions and events. As such we are not simply passive objects in space, but rather actively create it and understand it through our bodily situation. The body has been articulated as the mediation between thought and world, and the senses are utilised in deciphering the world in which we dwell. (Barrett 1994: 14; Ingold 2000) The materiality of the body overlaps with and is in conflict with the materiality of space. (Tschumi 1996: 39)

Michel de Certeau (1984) suggested that a space is the action of using a place, or actions of measurement occurring within a place, such as movement and the elapsing of time. Space is thus created through the experience of place “by an intersection of moving bodies”. Space is practiced place. According to de Certeau, the street is transformed into space by the

walkers on it, and space is the culmination of how bodies and objects are connected. In relation to travel, de Certeau (ibid: 130) stated that; “The opacity of the body in movement, gesticulating, walking, taking its pleasure, is what indefinitely organises a here in relation to an abroad.” This serves as a metaphor for othering spaces; it is in the actual embodied use of a place that space is created. It could be suggested then, that all space is in continual contestation if we accept that identities themselves are nomadic. (Deleuze & Guattari 1987; Braidotti 2011)

### **Territories of the Self**

Embodied symbolic interactionists such as Hall (1966) and Goffman (1971) described the territories of the self, also referred to as portable territory. It is within this portable territory that individuals enact their identities and relationship to others. Hall (1966) outlined four concentric zones in and around the body which are central to our embodied experience of the world; intimate, personal, social and public. These zones formed symbolic boundaries around the body and are ordinarily used to demarcate the nature of specific social relationships. Transgression of these zones by others results in a sense of unease and discomfort; a sensation everybody is all familiar with - such as when somebody unknown stands too close in uncrowded space. Stress and anxiety can also be induced when we are forced to transgress the territories of others. This is a pre-emptive embodied fear based flight or fight response to their potential reaction, which can result in physically feeling nauseous or the rise of adrenaline. Robert described the anxiety he experienced having to

transgress his own and make haptic invasions into other peoples' body spaces in order to walk through a crowd of young people in Chapter Five.

I have already touched upon Goffman's idea of 'regions' in the previous chapter, when the concepts of front and back stages were examined in relation to existentialist notions of being and authenticity. Goffman also supplied us with a great deal of detail on the territories of the self, which can be employed in order to understand the embodied connection between selves, others and space/place. This section will interrogate the data emerging from interviews with residents of Bryn Mawr in order to determine at what level body space determines peoples' experiences of and responses to crime and anti-social behaviour.

As spaces become more populated and housing more compressed, peoples' body space becomes larger, in an attempt to create bigger spatial boundaries around them. Young people are also reconfiguring their own understandings of body/space based upon physiological changes and consequent shifts in social relationships. These are based around proximity and distance, or nearness and farness. As such, young people may seek other places in which to construct and enact their identities or alter their use of already familiar places. These places can extend or contract the eight territories of the self, determined by Goffman. Goffman (1971:52) begins by outlining the nature of fixed, situational and egocentric preserves. Fixed territory was determined as geographical and owned, such as a house. Situational territory is presented as being for public temporary appropriation such as

a park bench. The egocentric preserves are the portable territory of the individual and move around with him or her.

*Personal space* is the space surrounding an individual, and is larger around the face (ibid: 53). This space shifts in size according to the situation a person finds themselves in; encroachments are place specific and also relevant are how many others a place is shared with (ibid: 54). This space can also be understood in terms of an envelope around the self (Irigaray 1994: 9). Goffman then describes *The Stall*, which is a temporary personal and tangible space such as chair, which provide “external, easily visible, defensible boundaries for a spatial claim (1972: 57). *Use Space* is the territory immediately around a person, transgressions of this space can be avoided through simply ‘keeping out of an individual’s way’, although accidental transgressions may occur such as in a busy nightclub. *The Turn* is the concept that some people have to ‘wait their turn’ whilst others are first in the queue (ibid: 59-61). *The Sheath* is a more tangible territory; it is the skin that covers the body and the clothes, and is given different levels of attention according to the individual’s culture. The *Possessional Territory* alludes to any set of objects that can be identified with an individual. The *Information Preserve* is a set of information or facts about an individual. This includes the contents of the individual’s mind such as memories, as well as the contents of their “pockets, purses, containers, letters, and the like, which the claimant can feel others have no right to ascertain...there is what can be directly perceived about an individual, his body’s sheath and his current behaviour, the issue here being his right not to be stared at or

examined.” (Ibid: 63) Finally, there is the *Conversational Preserve*, which relates to confidentiality of talk.

Several people referred to the presence of surveillance in the form of CCTV, but most did not mention it. The ones who did were all male, and one was directly affected by it, whilst the others knew there were cameras by the flats but assumed it was because there was so much trouble there. Before I left the field, there were moves towards installing more CCTV cameras in certain estates where there was known to be a lot of trouble. Young females referred to undercover or plain clothes police officers as “disguised”, but were ambivalent towards the presence of them. Adult residents generally found police interventions exciting to watch and were quite willing to engage in speculation as to what neighbours had done, such as when houses got raided. However, they did not like the thought of being watched themselves because it was a transgression of the territories of the self, particularly, the *information preserve*. As Tim explained:

People can look in...it may look quite bare, with the bay [window], but anyway, we are surrounded by cameras as well...because obviously they have had some trouble in these flats...I don't like it, I don't like 'big brother' watching me, I just want to get on...I don't do anything naughty. You're supposed to be innocent until proven guilty...is it the same in this country?

As Foucault did later, Sartre (1969: 260) described how one's sense of self and behaviour changes when one realises that one is being watched:



Someone is looking at me! What does this mean? It means that I am suddenly affected in my being and that essential modifications appear in my structure. I see myself because someone sees me.

Tim's feelings about being observed put him in the position of object and made him anxious, and unable to "get on". In short, the knowledge that he is being watched permeates his very being and prevents doing. He has also become othered in the symbolic order, from the perspective of the gaze.

During the fieldwork, I witnessed a number of breaches or transgressions of the territories of selves, particularly among young people. There were numerous transgressions of personal space. These often happened during preventative activities programmes when young people were working in close proximity to each other in the drama group or in the barn in the woods where young people learnt woodland skills and wood crafting. Ordinarily, they would deliberately bump into each other, which sometimes involved retaliation and occasionally escalated into a fight, and this was a regular occurrence on the streets. On a number of occasions, boys would get upset and "kick off" because their personal space had been invaded. If this happened in an enclosed area, other individuals would become distressed because of the threat to their own personal space as fighting broke out. Comments would be made regarding body odour "sweaty!" and when co-operation was required; "Come on bitch!" The young people who were not as physically competent at activities were the victims of ongoing bullying about their weight status (skinny or fat) or a lack of "fitness" which was always construed in terms of sexual attractiveness. As a response to this, some young people changed their sheath, by wearing clothes that covered more of

the body. One of these sheaths was the hood, or hoodie. The hood was seen as a protection from the outside world, when the hood was up, it almost created another territory. I was informed that hoodies gave off a clear message – do not talk to me! Conquergood has referred to a hood as a communicative symbol of “a subterranean space of life-sustaining warmth, intimacy and protection.” (1994: 47)

The Youth Offending Team hosted a number of drama workshops in 2011, in collaboration with drama teachers and a cameraman in order to produce a performance made by young people living in Bryn Mawr, many of whom had been involved in anti-social behaviour, or who were considered at risk of offending. The themes which were explored in-depth were those of the antagonist and protagonist. During the preparation for the filming, the young people wrote their own scripts about antagonists and protagonists in their own lifeworlds. Through this, a large quantity of data was obtained which related directly to breaches of the territories of the self.

Girls reported transgressions of the information preserve, and stated that boys would tell people that they “had done them”; which affected their “reputations” and made them appear “slaggy”. Gossip was indeed one of the main causes of fighting amongst young females, often embroiling large groups. The other reason behind physical fights which were direct transgressions of the sheath, as discussed in Chapter Five, was when a relationship broke up between young people due to the intervention or interference of another:

Lie to you. Use you and steal your boyfriend. Antagonists usually act like cows. Or say they're secretly with our boyfriend... (Lizzie)

Many young people claimed ongoing breaches of the information preserve in the form of transgressions of embodied privacies through staring, and attempting to engage one in an embodied dialogue:

[The antagonist is] the one that causes everything. Comes over and looks at me in a way that annoys me. Calls me names like bitch and dick head. Shows of in front of you.... (Jamie)

The descriptions of situations in which the young people were positioned as protagonists equally revealed the extent to which young people had to buffer themselves from ongoing invasions into the territories of the self, demonstrating that behaviours erupted directly in response to negative events in their lifeworlds:

A protagonist is...everything happens to them. Having a nice day when an antagonist comes in and ruins it. Or get sent nasty messages on Facebook. The protagonist might lash out and punch the people picking on them. And get upset every day. [They are] the main person in a situation who gets put under pressure. For example, they go into life threatening situations just to stop thinking about how upset they are, or just not to have it face it all again. They might get upset or cross with people who pick on them. [They] might close u and let bullying have no impact on them at all. Things happen to me. And you get into trouble – not the antagonist. And go home carrying a weight inside you.

Sarah provided an example of where her personal space, use space, the stall and her possessional territory were all transgressed on the bus on the way to school:

Sarah: yes, usually when I get on the bus, it's a really busy bus...in the morning it's fine cause not many people get it, and there's another bus to take you to school, but in the afternoon there's only one Bryn Mawr bus, so it's very very busy, and loads of the people have to stand up because there's not enough room, and sometimes Kaylie and Emma sit next to each other...sometimes it'll be me and Lara and when it's them two, I have to sit on my own...and usually I will just put my bag on my seat...but then, some big (as we call it) a GEEZER, comes, which is basically what we call, like a kinda big, kind of rough, kind of swearing and stuff, and he will chuck my bag on the floor, and sat next to me...

Claudine: aw, that wasn't very nice...

Sarah: and he said "I'm sitting here, mate" and I said "but I am waiting for my friend" because I was hoping...my other friend was coming on so...and then he said "argh, F off!" and he started swearing at me...and then he got up so then I walked off...and I managed to sit next to other friends, but it is quite like, well it depends on other friends, because me and Lara, we're not rough, you just have to be smart, and it's also...if your parents are like, there for you enough really, because some people who live in Bryn Mawr, their parents don't really care and let 'em go out at like 10 o'clock at night and...

Claudine: so, when you get the bus, do you feel a bit intimidated then? A bit scared?

Sarah: The first time I got on it, I was really worried because there was this boy and...it was a very bad day, it's not as bad now...there were these two boys and they were flicking rubber bands everywhere...and they said some stuff....and I don't even want to say.... they said it, and I was really sickened....and I just felt really intimidated and I was horrified, and I didn't want to get the bus...but I'm kind of used to it now... and you've just gotta make sure that at your last lesson, you have to run to the bus...so you can get a good seat and you can sit next to your friend...

Claudine: mmmm, so erm, so apart from swearing or being rude, do people do any other bad things on the bus?

Sarah: they do the spit thingy, what's it called? They'll get like a pen, and take the ink thing out, and spit it at people, they do that on the bus, they don't do it as much now but like, but a few weeks ago, it was all they were doing...and it's also like, because we need bus tickets, which are 40p each, a lot of people just say, "I'll give you one tomorrow" but they don't....and our bus driver (name), he's really nice, and he's a really nice man, and we know him quite personally, and people are just like, ah, I'll pay you back, I'll give you two tonight, and ....but then they never do....

Although there are other intensely sensorial transgressions of peoples' territories of the self which will be referred to later in the chapter, the immediate point to be made here is that young people have very little control over their personal territories in everyday life, and that in the maelstrom that is adolescence, boundaries are frequently transgressed as young people engage in processes of singular and group identity construction:

It is where they form symbolic moulds through which they understand themselves and their possibilities for the rest of their lives. It is also the stage where people begin to construct themselves through nuance and complexity, through difference as well as similarity. (Willis 1990: 8)

In the conflict experienced between the seeking of stability within peer groups on the one hand, and the fluid nature of adolescent social groups on the other, young people look elsewhere to construct identities and in the absence of other stable bonds, one of those areas can be attachment to place. Childress (2004: 196, 204) has pointed out that young people have limited ability to use and influence property, or in Goffman's terms, *fixed territory*:

They can't own it, can't modify it, can't rent it. They can only choose, occupy and use property of others. This limitation is true in their communities, it's true in their schools, and it's true in their homes...kids make great use of their communities' leftovers – the negative space in the positively planned and owned world.

Young people look elsewhere for a territory of their own, especially in the absence of any surplus space at home. This was important for young people living in Bryn Mawr due to the fact that many had to share small homes with siblings. Additionally, many had to negotiate

the fact that they did not have access to leisure resources due to relative deprivation. Although there were regular activities put on by the Youth Offending Services preventative activities programme at weekends and after school, young people were still seeking a place to go with their social groups. A core aspect to young peoples' identity formation then, was territory or place with meaning. Some of these places were contested, and some of these places were the edgelands.

### **Adventures: edgelands and edgework**

Let her have brave days and truth.  
Let her go places that we've never been;  
Trust and delight in her youth.

(Neil Gaiman 2011)

For Yi-Fu Tuan; "Human beings require both space and place. Human lives are a dialectical movement between shelter and venture, attachment and freedom" (1977:54). Edgelands can embody this dialectic and fulfil the needs of young people for their own place to go. Edgelands are those places that are unclaimed spaces, asking to be inhabited and lived through. Some can possibly be related to the "criminogenic situations" of spatial governmentality discourses, but I want to situate them in another narrative; that of the last remains of rapidly disappearing childhoods. Farley and Roberts understand what edgelands are:

If you know those places where overspill housing estates break into the scrubland, wasteland: if you know these underdeveloped, unwatched territories, you know they have 'edge'. So much might depend on being able to see the edgelands. Giving them a name might help, because up until now they have been without any signifier, an incomprehensible swathe we pass through without regarding; untranslated landscape. And edgelands, by and large, aren't meant to be seen, except perhaps as a blur from a car window...the trouble is, if we can't see the edgelands, we can't imagine them, or allow them any kind of imaginative life. And so they don't really exist. (2012: 5)

In Bryn Mawr, edgelands consist of paths, bits of woodland, unoccupied structures, alleyways, the place between the river and the field, overgrown parts of the hill behind the estates, parts of the estates themselves. Many of the edgelands have a temporal aspect to them; for instance, young people only hang out down by the river in the Summer. Others have been claimed by certain groups of young people, whilst others are excluded:

As I said under the bridge, there's a place where the little turning is on the left, there's a river, and you're allowed to go down there if you want to cross the road at the bottom, there is an underpass there, and then there is like this little cave, there are two openings, an exit and an entrance, and there's loads of graffiti - and that is where rough people hang out. (Sarah)

Groups of young people had built dens up in the woods behind the estates. These dens were furnished with found things, and made "homely". However, there was disappointment as somebody they referred to as a "hobo" had moved in and destroyed one of the big dens. Other groups appropriated them and several girls shared a sense of disgust that their dens were littered with used condoms. In many respects, it was as if they had experienced a sense of being the victims of vandalism. The combined experiences of seeing their place destroyed also instilled a sense of fear into some of the girls about spending time at their den:

It's really creepy there now. It is like you're being watched. (Natalie)

For young people who have limited access to resources and their own places to go, edgelands are learning experiences in their transitions. They provide a sense of ownership of territory in a lifeworld where other territories of the self are repeatedly transgressed. They provide an untranslated landscape on which to reflexively inscribe feelings and memories. They are punctuations in the world and have particular *genius loci*. Like young people themselves, edgelands are liminal, in between spaces, and represent adventure and freedom from the habitus of everyday life. There is little wonder young people seek them out. As the processes young people go through in order to become adults, their lifeworlds are continually shifting, conflicting and full of doubt. Edgelands form an integral part of the lifeworld or habitus of young people in Bryn Mawr with which their identities are fused for a time. Most adults spend most of their time indoors, possibly walking (or driving if they work and are lucky enough to own a car) to the shops and schools. Young people however, experience Bryn Mawr through extensive play and hanging out at different times of the day and night. In this sense, place becomes inscribed into their habitus in a deep and profound way. In a society which otherwise "stifles and erases identity" (Conquergood 1994; 47), place creates and supports it. These places, and the contested spaces discussed below allow young people to experience a semblance of autonomy in what can be otherwise chaotic lives.

### **Contested spaces**



Whilst the young people who were part of the Mawr Mob prior to the dispersal order spent most of their time in town afterwards, younger people from the ages of ten to seventeen usually remain within the general area of the Bryn Mawr estates. Other spaces within the matrix of the estates have been appropriated for sitting, talking and smoking. These spaces are the contested spaces in that they are, in Goffmans' terms, temporary territory – in theory open to anyone, but really subject to the *turn* that never happens. When they are claimed as a temporary territory by young people, they are either reconfigured and absorbed into mainstream space or destroyed. On a walk around Bryn Mawr, three young people stopped at what was once a bus stop shelter. The 'roof' had been removed so that all that was left was the wall behind it in a bid to prevent loitering. This had been a favourite place for young people to sit when it was raining. They could "light a fag then". Since then, they have instead clustered in covered alleyways between houses in a bid to keep dry on wet days and nights. Jill, a youth worker with Communities First took me on a three hour filmed walk and interview around Bryn Mawr. She showed me places the young people hadn't; these were top secret places such as disused buildings, where children went to hide if they didn't want to go to school.

As the local partnerships were working to prevent further outbreaks of anti-social behaviour during the course of the fieldwork, play workers were brought in to encourage children and young people to remain on the estates in the school holidays but under supervision. The novelty value of this at first excited the young people, but by the end a number of them

were beginning to feel boredom. As they lost control of their usual play zone of the streets in front of their homes, several of them began to appropriate items within the street for their own amusement; namely large green dustbins. Whilst some of the play workers struggled to re-engage these young people, others made sure that no property was damaged, and eventually another layer of boredom set in and these young people left. It could be proposed that spaces of contestation exist not only between interested groups, but also within selves. This became explicit when I attended a graffiti workshop organised by the Youth Offending Team.

A graffiti artist had been employed from Cardiff to teach young people about creating graffiti. A space had been created by the organisers of the event – outside one of the local theatres, and boards had been erected on scaffolding where work was being carried out at the back of the building. It was proposed that a piece of graffiti art would cover the wall. Many of the lads got actively involved in spraying the ‘allowed space’ of the wall. It served as a consensual space for what would otherwise be a deviant act. The ‘performance space’ of the graffiti workshop was clearly delineated and cordoned off from the ‘public’ by red and white cones; a secret zone until the ‘work’ was completed, indicative of the tension seen in many criminal or anti-social acts between secrecy and disclosure. The marks made upon the wall were both planned and improvised.

Throughout the day, this superficially singular site became the locale for a number of spaces. There seemed to be an ongoing tension between consent and deviance, acted out

by the participants, similar to the tensions felt at the play scheme days when a 'legitimate' fire was lit on the streets, although fire lighting is ordinarily disapproved of. Different events throughout the day created different spaces, and the space became both a place of deviance and a place of enunciation. It was almost as if, socially, the individuals involved brought 'portable' territories with them, which were demarcated by invisible, though operative zones and boundaries into which entry was controlled through gesture and movement. The place in its abstract geographical sense, seemed almost irrelevant in the grand scale of things.

The embodied space created by the Youth Offending Team workers was also evident as they acted as border police, guards and gatekeepers, similar to the play workers on the streets. The workshop zone was heavily controlled to a degree by the youth workers. The space was simultaneously exclusive and inclusive. The 'general public' were largely kept out by guards at either end of a walkway. Behaviour was either approved resulting in inclusion, or denied culminating in exclusion, and physical expulsion. Bodies were confined, trapped, observed and monitored, and the space seemed to act as a microcosm for the state. Authority was generally unquestioned.

During the day, there were "re-interpretations" of the zone of consent. At one stage, deviance was actively brought into the space of consent, as one young person found himself in conflict with the graffiti artist over the use of spray paint. To assert his self-perceived dominant status, he tagged the wall of the private house behind the wall. The space was

immediately transformed from a consensual space to a space of contestation. I understood it, as an observer, that the lad involved had situated himself in a temporary autonomous zone in which he had momentarily enjoyed control. Being forced by the youth workers to apologise to the artist and scrub the paint off the wall, the space then became a site of justice and punishment. We can also understand space as dreamlike. The offender, when asked by myself why he had done it, explained “I can’t help it.” He was almost “beside himself.” In other words, his actions lacked control. For Katz (1988: 74) play vandalism has a dream-like quality where the real is questioned; people “commonly feel when they are arrested that, this can’t be happening to me!”

The process of committing the act of criminality can thus be read as if the person was moving through a dream-like space, the body acting almost without conscious thought. Bodies can learn behaviour through practice, and like driving, it can become “second nature” or embodied “automatic” practice without thought.

### **Fear and risk**

Without exception, everyone, no matter what their age, at some point felt frightened when out in Bryn Mawr. In some cases, this was due to hearsay, rather than direct experience:

People told us, “ooh I wouldn’t go walking there at night, you’ll get beaten up!” Walking at night, whenever we have walked to the shops, it has been fine! (Amy)

Interviewees perceived the alleyways between the houses on one side of Bryn Mawr to be intimidating, and referred to them as “rat runs”. The lack of visibility and tall walls had a claustrophobic feel; “you wouldn’t want to meet anyone down there on a night!” Most parents found anti-social behaviour associated with young people to be irritating as opposed to frightening, although there was a widespread acknowledgement that older people might find it intimidating. There was a generic fear expressed regarding paedophiles, particularly among parents and girls, as there were apparently a number of them living on the estates. Boys seemed more ambivalent about it, and made them the subject of many jokes.

Interviews with girls aged between 11 and 13 years old revealed interesting data on imagined and symbolic spaces in Bryn Mawr. Girls experience and perceive certain spaces within the community as dangerous. Both the natural and built landscape almost becomes the space of a dark fairy tale, or dark myth, and an embodied space of risk.

Natalie: I get scared that someone’s following me. One night, we went for a walk at like 10 o’clock at night or something, down this little path, she was walking one way and I was walking the other, and in the end she had to walk me home cause I was so scared of walking on my own and then she had to walk home on her own...she runs!

Embodied selves avoid spaces and times which dwell in the myths of the community or social group. Archetypes exist in the collective unconscious of the girls’ group and become embodied in dialectically opposed people within the community – opposed in both sex and

age. Below, an interview with Sarah reveals the discomfort she feels going up the stairs to her flat which is a threshold or liminal zone between public and private space:

Sarah: on the second floor there's this old man and we think he might be a paedophile...

Claudine: ok why do you think that?

Sarah: because when I had come from the bus to the flat, when I was walking through, he was walking through the door the same time as me, coming out of the door and he smiled at me and said "Hi, are you OK?" and I said "yeah, I'm OK" and I told my mum upstairs and she said "Oh, stay away from him!" he seems pretty dodgy, I don't know if he is a paedophile but he might be a bit of a perv...

Claudine: Oh...did he make you feel uncomfortable?

Sarah: he kind of went (pulls face) if you know what I mean...but there's this really old man...I haven't seen him because I haven't lived in the place that long...called Mad Mick and he's a really bad paedophile...and he has raped about three teenage girls.....and everyone always tries to stay away from him...whenever people see him he always has like a co-op shopping bag or something...and he always has like a shopping bag, like it's really weird...but everyone stays away.....

Similarly, the natural landscape of the park is also a potential zone for sexual predators for another young girl. Parks are traditionally part of public space, but also that of the family – a space where mothers take their children to play. This particular space is also a temporally bound one:

Claudine: what about walking around, do you go anywhere?

Amanda: um, yeah, I go anywhere really

Claudine: do you walk around in the day and at night as well? On your own?

Amanada: yeah, I walk around in the day on my own, but sometimes I walk up to my sisters at night on my own...

Claudine: and where do you walk, do you stick to the main roads?

Amanda: yeah, I mostly stick to the main roads

Claudine: and what about the park, do you ever walk through the park?

Amanda: no I never walk through the park as there's no lights

Claudine: would you walk through the park if there were better lights?

Amanda: probably if there were lights

Claudine: so what worries you about walking there without lights?

Amanda: because a paedo or something can just come out from a bush...

(Amanda -laughter)

Claudine: So, how do you know that there are paedos there?

Amanda: there's loads of paedos living in the park and stuff...

Claudine: what so they hang out in the park?

Amanda: no, they're usually in bushes

(Amanda - laughter)

Claudine: really?! How old are these people?

Amanda: I don't know!

Claudine: so who told you about these people? Have you seen them or?

Amanda: no! There was a story that someone got raped...

Claudine: oh dear...

Amanda: in the park....

Claudine: what, by a paedo?

Amanda: yeah!

Claudine: that was lurking in the bushes?

(Amanda -explosive laughter)

Claudine: Ok, so you've just heard stories...

Amanda: yeah! And about hobos!

A third girl of a similar age to the others indicates that the flats and the park both contain paedophiles:

Claudine: do you walk around on your own?

Katie: yeah, 'cause I know the place – it's like my home town

Claudine: do you walk around at night too?

Katie: I'd be quite scared at night because people say there's paedophiles...by the park and stuff...

Claudine: by the park?

Katie: 'cause they got chased by a paedophile once...but I think they like, tried to like, have a go at him and then started running...

Claudine: so how did they know he was a paedophile then?

Katie: because there's one – 'Mad Mick', who lives, you know by the old peoples' home, when you go down the hill, there's like a white house, he lives there, and they know he's a paedo because he got arrested because there was a kid in his house once....and the kid reported it to the police...

Claudine: so, a lot of teenagers hang out in the park too then?

Katie: yeah

Claudine: so, do you know what they do there?

Katie: they smoke weed and stuff

Claudine: they use the park to take drugs, when there's little kids there as well?

Katie: yeah, but they all, like gather round in a circle and sometimes there's no kids go there, just like emos go there

Claudine: erm, so OK you don't like going near the park because of the paedo?

Katie: I do go sometimes in the day with my cousin when she's down, but I don't go to the park much, no

Claudine: Is there anywhere else you don't like walking in the day?

Katie: yeah, near the flats, you know the flats going down the hill...because I think there's a paedo living there, you know the little park in the area, the little one?

Claudine: hmmm....

Katie: there's a paedo there, he's not that bad but I don't want to walk there

Claudine: OK, are there any other 'bad' people who live in those areas?



Katie: not that I know of, no!

Claudine: OK...erm, are there any parts of the place that you think are particularly nice, or...

Katie: my street, that's all....although there was known to be a paedophile there once, and he kept his daughter there...for quite a long time, and he got arrested and jailed for 21 years I think...then he came out and he lives here but he's not a paedo anymore...

Claudine: so, your main worry then, about living there, is the paedophiles?

Katie: yes

These snippets of interviews, which form part of a larger body of similar data, can be interpreted in various ways. Stories and perhaps social myth contribute to the fear of sex crime which these girls experience and which in turn governs their embodied and temporal use of space. In *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, Luce Irigaray alerts us to Merleau-Ponty's reduction of the conceptualization of the flesh to visual perception. Most phenomenological analysis shows that perception is based on a view, a watching. The eyes are doorways that open out onto the world, the threshold of the body between self and others. The visual field is a resource for aligning us to space and place. In these short excerpts from interviews, one girl refers strongly to the visual field as knowing that a particular man is a paedophile because of the way in which she sees him look at her, as she demonstrated the face he pulled staring at her chest. The visual perception here powerfully influences her decision – she both sees (and therefore knows) as she is seen. The male gaze is predatory, her gaze is *knowing*. An instinct or feeling speaks of danger and sexual threat. She also refers to the way in which he spoke to her – his words as they stand separated from the body, his facial expressions, his gaze, seem innocent. The speech, however, forms part of the relation. Is this intersubjectivity if there is as yet no space for a true female subject? She is the object in

the scene. She then returns to the space of the maternal (talking to her mother) who solidifies her fears by telling her to stay away from him, feminine power diminished, her freedom to be in that threshold space alone curtailed. What role did her mother play in this scenario? What is the mother/daughter relation? How was the symbolic order reproduced? Sarah then talks about someone she hasn't seen in her reality; somebody invisible to her but about whom she has heard stories and he is described in relation to an object he carries as much as in relation to his acts of sexual violence. How do the two stories of the visible and the invisible interrelate?

Amanda however, is frightened of the dark, the invisible, of paedophiles lurking in bushes – here the public space of the park is aligned to the 'natural' world. Yet in other parts of the interviews, the park is portrayed as a safe zone in the day for young people to play and hang out. Space is bound to subjectivity, the imaginary enacts spatialities and performs subjects and non-subjects. One has to ask who the 'master' subject is performing in and through these particular spaces, and whether this imaginary ultimately belong to the masculine or feminine.

In Katie's interview, she casually spoke about teenagers taking drugs in the park – a 'safe' play space for young children. Relatively speaking, this has little impact on her reality and it is not understood as endangering the children in any way in comparison to the presence of people she sees as paedophiles. Again, her fear is based upon stories about events and characters in the neighbourhood, as opposed to personal experience. The fear which arises

in girlhood; fear of rape or abduction and rape by a male endures into adulthood and female fear of crime has been closely allied to female fear of men (Naffine 1997; Stanko 1995) It is possible to go back to the myth of Perspophone/Demeter as interpreted by Luce Irigaray as a female genealogy. There is an imagined infernal power who abducts the daughter from the mother and rapes her. This is a powerful metaphor for the destruction of the relationship between the daughter and the mother by patriarchy. The girls in the interview data are between eleven and thirteen years old; they are standing on the threshold between childhood and womanhood. It is during this liminal time which characterises female adolescence when they are most exposed to the dominance of patriarchy, of being separated from the maternal-feminine that has still retained a power with them.

Girls who participated in the study showed that they were extremely sensitive to being watched and even more fearful of any proximity with men they believed to be paedophiles; making sure that everybody “kept their distance.” The gaze objectifies girls and women and masters them, psychically if not physically. There is a spatial awareness of distance from the perspective of the gaze. However, for girls and women, there is a feeling of the proximate as the information preserve is transgressed; it is a literal breach of personal space. When the gaze is turned on a male, even when it is disembodied and via an object, there is the same sense of distress that girls and women feel when being watched. An awareness of crime and anti-social behaviour in one’s lifeworld, when it is perceived as a threat or discomfort heightens the senses. In order to avoid these situations – whether imaginary, based on half-truths or potentially real threats, young people in Bryn Mawr tended to go out in groups,

which provided them with a sense of safety and security, but ironically caused other people to feel intimidated.

## **Summary**

The transition to a new age in turn necessitates a new perception and a new conception of space-time, the inhabiting of places, and of containers, or envelopes of identity. It assumes and entails an evolution or transformation of forms, of the relations of matter and form and of the interval between: the trilogy of the constitution of place.

(Irigaray 2004: 9)

It is now necessary in criminology to re-evaluate the understanding of what is meant by a geography of crime. Although there are different approaches to space which could be appropriated by criminologists such as cultural geographies (Hayward 2012), it is perhaps impossible to carry out this project without considering the body. All space starts from the body and the relationship between bodies and space as fluid, unstable, plural and complex. Crime and anti-social behaviour is corporeality, and is always linked to space. Likewise, it is not possible to fear crime and anti-social behaviour without referring to spaces and places, whether they are in the public or private sphere. For Tuan (1979), the body was lived and space was humanly construed space. All events in the social world create spaces; a fight between young people breaks out and people gather round to watch or intervene.

Conversely, place or senses of place, their histories and social networks can create events. Bodies inscribe themselves upon spaces just as places are inscribed on bodies. Space can be reinterpreted in relation to performances discussed in the previous chapter, as the *mise-en-scene*, but can also be theorised by allegory more generally. This is not to say that power should be ignored, but rather focused upon in different ways to what has become the norm in criminology. What is one person's place of deviance is simply another's place of enunciation, and a criminology of space can help us to arrive at this, as spaces of abjection or deviance can be potentially reconstituted as spaces of resistance.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### Conclusion

“Think globally, act locally.”

Many ethnographic studies situated in late modernity talk about how processes of globalisation have affected local areas. These are ordinarily discussed in terms of spatiality, and frequently look at how the West has influenced the ‘Rest’ or indeed at the increasing urbanisation of the western world itself. Anthropologists have variously decreed that the west is able to import and incorporate non-western knowledges and hail them as positive. However, there is an inclination towards condemning the appropriation of western knowledges elsewhere, as these might result in the transformation of local knowledges; “An implicit assumption is that while ‘we’ are able to incorporate alien ideas into our existing discourses without destroying them, ‘they’ are less able to do so.” (Howell 1995: 176) Anthropologists consequently are lamenting the loss of communities that have not experienced culture contact with the contaminating West. Likewise, ethnographies pertaining to local situations in sociology in Britain have followed this trend; although this time with a dirge over the loss of the very notion of the traditional community instead.

This has resulted in a crisis of representation (Thrift 2008) and Auge (1995) has described this loss of locale as a proliferation of the development of what he terms 'non-places.' Globalisation has become a dominant discourse in the social sciences, as vast space has trumped small place as a meta-narrative for the all-consuming singular master discourse (Casey 1997). Yet, perhaps as Casey suggests, an idea which I applaud, the focus should turn to place once more, with social change being instigated in local situations, in processes of what have been termed counter-works (Fardon 1995). These counter-works, for instance, could stem from the appropriation of a process long described by anthropologists; that of allowing young people a period of chaos in which social order is inverted and legitimate forms of edgework encouraged, as a *rite de passage*. Maruna (2010) has explored the possibility of creating rites of passage for offenders leaving prison, in order to ease the passage from prison life to civilian life and as a means of preventing re-offending behaviours.

Similarly, phenomenological experiences of time have been ignored as, discursively embedded in notions of social change are the temporally linear terms of the *longue durée* (Braudel 1958), or the onward march to our end (Žižek 2011). Here, I wish to challenge that. Rooted in the data and the policy that this thesis has referred to is a profound sense of loss and the dichotomous desire to at once go back or return, and move forward towards a period of change and progress, which is imagined somewhere in the future. The present is simply messy and nobody wants to accept it. Politicians are struggling to perpetuate a

reality which accedes to a past and a future simultaneously. Discourses in the form of the 'spin' formulated for public consumption and academic research appropriated by policy makers owns and determines the past and also imagines the future for us, leaving little energy for the present. The young people, however, get on with being-in-the-world in the present in a society that has rejected them because perhaps; a society that experiences a profound sense of ennui and which deep down, feels it is doomed.

This thesis has explored the social meanings and life worlds of people residing in Bryn Mawr in relation to the phenomenon of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. It has also attempted to situate them within wider discourses on community, power, embodiment and space and place. What I have sought to do here in its totality by bringing both the body and place back to criminology was perhaps overly ambitious, but timely nonetheless. I have not done as much justice to each component of the project as I would have liked due to the limitations on scale and the number of obstacles faced along the way. However, I hope I have planted seeds which will grow.

This thesis has aimed to situate peoples' experiences and perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour in a group of housing estates in Wales within wider discourses on power, policy, identity, and space. It has attempted to challenge stereotypes and commonly held assumptions about people who engage in crime and anti-social behaviour through examining the ways in which identities are enacted in relation to different social groups and to spatiality in a specific geographical area. In particular, this thesis stands against representations that construct young people as abject others and instead posits that young



peoples' identities are ephemeral, contradictory and therefore always open to renegotiation. Similarly, enacting some of what are termed anti-social behaviours may simply be aspects of growing up and can be reconfigured as aspects of chaotic and disorganised *rites de passage*, because there is an absence of socially recognised rites of passage available to be utilised. These alternatives to formalised rites of passage may include but are not limited to 'hanging around' in groups and claiming a collective identity in a process of *communitas*, or by incorporating as their own, certain places into their lifeworlds in a time-space where they have very little in terms of emotional security and materially, and have no place to call their own. Experiences of young people should not continue to be shaped in negative terms but instead be reassessed in more positive ways. Additionally, young people find a sense of existential freedom in loosening the binding controls that society places upon them. This sense of freedom may be intimately connected to place, which provides stability for enacting and 'trying on' different social roles, which is important to their self-development (Mead 1934, Piaget 1955). By altering our perception of abject statuses within culture and society, we can perhaps move towards a new culture of energy and begin to create the community that is desired. This community would begin by paying attention to the other(s) and seeking more ethical relationships.

In Chapter One, I provided an outline of the thesis and its primary main research questions. These questions sought to tackle the nuances of multiple voices within Bryn Mawr and reflexively assess its social structures relating to power and inequality. Chapter Two described the methodologies through which these questions were posed. Here, I focused upon the specificities of ethnographic research which were appropriate to the research and

I noted the ethical issues arising from carrying out research with vulnerable people. In Chapter Three, I outlined a number of discourses on the body and embodiment that I have used in order to analyse four key themes emerging from the research, which can be summarised as follows: Firstly, I explored perceptions and experiences of community. Secondly, definitions of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour were described and this chapter keyed in ideas about disciplinary power, symbolic violence and habitus and how these reflexively worked on the body and embodiment. Thirdly, I explored in depth how experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour can be reshaped in terms of the dramaturgical body, and how dualistic discourses are being continually enacted and performed. The fourth analytical chapter developed these established themes of alterity, power and symbolic violence through a deep mapping of body/space and offered different solution to exploring space and place. This conclusive chapter will now revisit the fundamental arguments in this thesis before describing ultimately how a move to a community of ethical relations could be achieved.

I began by looking at how the community was understood from the position of historical constructions of ideas about communities, the policy position at the time of the research and individual perceptions of community within the geographical location of Bryn Mawr. This chapter provided an introduction to the geographical location and the extent to which a sense of community was felt, providing a background setting for the rest of the thesis. It critically charted the development of the idea of community from the work of Tönnies to postmodern thinkers such as Bauman and Irigaray. It looked at how the concept originated in evolutionary terminology as the 'other' to progress, industrialisation and civilized society,

and was therefore embedded in dualist discourses of inequality from its inception. The argument then moved on to a crucial discussion of how, despite the discourses of post-colonialism and post-modernism, these historical constructions endure and have influenced government agendas in terms of social policy, community development and crime control. At this point, a pause is necessary to remember chapter three, in which I described the theoretical and philosophical approaches to the body in criminology. I traced historical approaches to the criminal bodies detailed by Lombroso, who influenced by Darwin, described criminals in evolutionary terms as atavistic and primitive. One has to wonder just how far we have come if policy makers are using concepts that have equally arisen from studies of so-called primitive communities, which are in need of 'civilizing'. The influence of these policies regarding community development on Bryn Mawr was described, notably in relation to the implementation of the Communities First programme, the criminalisation of social policy and a multi-agency approach to tackling the perceived causes of crime. An inherent feature of the construction of the concept of community is a temporal element, a looking back to and desire for the past. The natural desire of people to look backwards when the present is unsatisfactory by comparison was hooked into by communitarian discourses. Whilst the government at the time positioned the ideal community in the future, it relied upon past and diverse concepts of community to do this in order to anchor their rhetoric in a variety of perceptions about community, thus maintaining a wider pool of support for policy.

The dialectic inherent in constructions of communities such as nation states was recited by residents in Bryn Mawr, who built their own group identities through their interaction with

others. Shared values and a sense of a moral community were seen amongst more established residents with stronger family ties to the area. This finding reiterates some of Girling *et al.*'s (1999) and Jones' (2010) conclusions that established residents in an area with stronger social and spatial bonds tend to be more motivated to define deviancy up and demarcate symbolic boundaries in terms of processes akin to hygiene management, and maintaining controls over space. One might have expected in a county with a high proportion of Welsh speakers that differences may have been grounded in language. However, the othering processes that were described were irrespective of whether they spoke the Welsh language as many people born and raised in the area did not speak Welsh and nobody mentioned an overall sense of Welsh identity. Instead, established residents' senses of identity and community mainly came from memories they attached to the place and the positioning of themselves as different from incomers, who were seen as strange, untrustworthy and likely to be criminal. In contrast, incomers had a very different sense of community in which identities were as unstable as the fleeting glimpses of individuals and families they witnessed moving in and out of the estates. As such, they felt part of a mobile community and were consequently perhaps more open minded. This chapter introduced central ideas of power, violence, symbolic boundaries and alterity, and used the theme of the other body.

Chapter Five described the inconsistencies in policy relating to anti-social behaviour as an introduction and a context for the exploration of perceptions and experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour in Bryn Mawr. It was important to discuss how the themes of power and social controls shaped peoples' experiences and perceptions of crime and anti-social

behaviour. Power was described in terms of Elias's internal and external social controls, Foucault's insidious and diffuse capillary power and Bordieu's symbolic violence. Kristeva's constitution of abjection was raised as a phenomenological ground for exploring dirt, drugs, youth and single mothers as pegs on which to hang the various discourses on anti-social behaviour. This weaving together of abjection and capillary power provided a ground for analysis of the data, as Foucault's 'regimes of truth' and 'knowledge' were produced and reproduced by peoples' lived experiences. This chapter consisted of the thick description of peoples' narratives regarding varying perceptions and experiences of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in Bryn Mawr. Many of these descriptions reflect what Husserl termed 'natural attitudes' and formed part of what Bordieu called the habitus. This included a section on the Mawr Mob – a gang of young people who have been described as monsters who terrorised Bryn Mawr for several years prior to a dispersal order being issued. One of the key messages that arose from this chapter was that young people seemed to 'move on' or grow out of anti-social behaviour. This suggests that rather than being a fixed identity, anti-social behaviour could be reconfigured as a performance of emotions and an enacting of shifting identities.

Chapter six looked at how identities and behaviours as performances searching for authenticity, and here employed Goffman's dramaturgy and a phenomenology which has a more distinctive existentialist flavour. Goffman's framework is complex and this chapter interprets the data through his different concepts including impression management, regions, teams and mimesis. A vast amount of data was handled in order to examine the diverse nature of performances in Bryn Mawr's social world. These included sub-cultural

affiliations, body modification, self-harm and gender. This chapter demonstrated how roles, which were pre-existent in the lifeworld or habitus were continually performed and identities re-mastered. Bearing in mind Denzin's (2003: 135) comments referred to earlier that Goffman failed to acknowledge power in his performances, and that his ideas should be further developed by emphasising performance as liminal, a struggle and a socio-political act, crisis events such as fights were looked at in a different manner. Similarly, Denzin's observations that mimesis should be moved away from, was addressed through Irigaray's idea of mimesis as a strategy for challenging the repetitive reproductions of social lives.

Chapter seven considered the possibilities of re-invigorating criminology with a more nuanced geography of crime than the singular administrative criminological approaches to space. This chapter explores the potential of using Goffman's embodied symbolic interactionism, particularly with regard to his concept of the "territories of the self" as a starting point for imagining body/space, and uses what are construed as anti-social behaviours in young people to describe this. Following this, a more phenomenological understanding of space was discussed, with a focus on the subjectivity of adolescent girls' embodiment.

This thesis had several ambitious goals. Firstly, it represented an ethnographic study of a small semi-urban locale in Wales, particularly in relation to its young people. Secondly, it had three main philosophical and theoretical aims, as ethnography and theory should be bound to each other to produce a solid sense of the social as internally sprung and

dialectically produced. (Willis & Trondman 2000: 395) The first aim was to bring the body and embodiment to criminology, as they are imagined in embodied symbolic interactionism and phenomenology; “refiguring [...] the body so that it moves from the periphery to the centre of analysis, so that it can now be understood as the very “stuff” of subjectivity.” (Grosz 1984: ix) The second aim was to imagine how space and place could be understood as divergent from the norms in criminology. The third was to imagine how the topics of criminology could be re-imagined from the perspective of the female body.

The emic nature of this particular ethnographic research was therefore inductive in that theoretical insights informed the interpretation of the data in the context of discovery. Due to the subjective local and partial nature of the analysis, only one interpretation can be provided. During the last two decades, there has been a growing interest in the close relationship between researchers’ personal histories and the detail of ethnographic fieldwork. These factors combine to impact on methodological and theoretical approaches. Ethnography is reflexive and fieldwork is shaped by researcher identities just as researchers are also moulded by fieldwork experiences. The conclusions drawn here therefore reflect both the outcomes from the ethnography and personal history and identity of the researcher as the two cannot be separated.

Revisiting the first philosophical aim, it can be said that through the thesis, the body and embodiment has underpinned each interpretive chapter. In chapter four, the social body and the body of the ‘other’ was introduced. In chapter five, there was a focus on the

dialectic between docile and abject bodies, which currently are dependent on each other reproduce the social order. Chapter six explored the dramaturgical or performative body, and finally chapter seven looked at the body and space, which achieved (at least partially) the second aim of initiating phenomenological studies of spatiality in criminology.

Each chapter has closed with references to feminisms which reveal strategies for re-thinking social life, governmentality and approaches to crime and anti-social behaviour from the perspective of the other body; that of woman. In chapter four, this involved re-imagining community, because in the Western imaginary, community is aligned with the feminine. In chapter five, it defended abjection as a site for possible resistance. Chapter six concluded by offering a mimetic strategy for exposing outworn 'regimes of truth.' Chapter seven suggested a plural re-imagining of spaces of emancipation.

This thesis additionally argues for alternative representations of young people involved in anti-social behaviour that question the master narratives of young people as abject others and that acknowledges the fluid nature of identity construction. Yet, we have not yet reached a state where we can depart from the dialectic in order for this to happen. Jock Young (2007: 23-5) referred to a state of bulimia and Hall et al. (2008) talk of excess and narcissism as being responsible for crime in the twenty first century in Britain. Both are embodied metaphors for a sick society. Whereas their focus is on economic deprivation in a society of excess which determines a lack of access to legitimate consumption, my focus is on the female and her cultural deprivation in a society of excess and which determines her



lack of access to a democracy that begins between two, and from which a dialogue of sharing could begin. Lippens (2009: 251) has asserted that:

The unfinished project of critical criminology is what it is: unstoppable, and fuelled by the radical negativity [in Sartrean terms] through which its other (Law – State – Power – Separation – Domination – Rule – Authority – Inequality – Order – Commodification – Categorisation – and so on), as well as itself, come into the world.

Critical criminology in effect criticizes patriarchy and its dominant structures as its 'other'. Feminist criminology has often been situated as an aspect of critical criminology and shares this view; that an *essentially* patriarchal set of structures need interrogating. We are governed by a set of strategies for defining self from others, and these are symbolically linked to primary concepts underpinning the policy and social worlds described in this thesis. These can be articulated as follows:

Male/female

Self/other

Mind/body

Culture/ nature

Civilized/primitive

Reality/appearance

Whole/part

Agent/resource

Active/passive

Right/wrong

Truth/illusion

God/human

Global/local

(Adapted from Haraway 1991 :177)

In order to look afresh at this dual world, and think being differently, we must first position ourselves in the place of the other, which of course constitutes a risk (Sjoberg 2005). This means adopting the position of the female:

We have to relinquish a certain way of being moulded by our past logic in order to reach another way of Being. Sexual difference is the perspective that has yet to take place, whose place is in the future anterior – which, when it occurs, will have transformed the ways all knowledges, all practices, and all relations have been understood, from perspectives whose positioning has never been occupied or taken place before. (Irigaray 2004: 8)

The conclusion then calls for a radical (re)discovery of the female body as a starting point for thought, and as a place from which a new ethics of relating and understanding can emerge. Then from this thoroughly *local* acting, *global* thought can proceed.

## **APPENDICES**

### **List of adult participants**

#### **Professionals**

Daniel, Communities First

John, Communities First

Jill, Communities First

Robert, Neighbourhood Watch & resident

Meurig, Policing and Community Team member, shop owner

Gary, Police Community Safety Officer

Stuart, Youth Offending Team practitioner

Anthony, Youth offending Team practitioner

Sally, Youth Outreach practitioner

Phil, Drug Outreach practitioner

Marged, General Practitioner/doctor

Gail, General Practitioner/doctor

#### **Parents and residents**

Anna, parent and resident

Annette, grandparent, parent and resident

Sharon, parent and resident

Caroline, parent and resident

Sue, parent and resident

Amy, parent and resident

Martin, parent and resident

### **Consent Form A (Adult)**

Department of Law and Criminology  
University of Aberystwyth  
Hugh Owen Building  
Penglais  
Aberystwyth  
SY23 3DY

Contact: Claudine Young  
Mobile: \*\*\*\*\*

### **A study into perceptions and experiences of crime in your area \*\*\*\*\*.**

My research at Aberystwyth University involves studying what it is like to live in your area, and especially how crime and anti-social behaviour affects peoples' lives. An important part of the study is to listen to people talk about their experiences and understanding of these issues.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study. If you have any questions about the study, or if there is something you are not sure about, please ask the interviewer to discuss this with you before signing the consent form.

I would like to remind you that participation in this study involves an interview that will take approximately one hour of your time; however there may be a follow-up interview at a later date. Subject to your consent, these interviews will be tape recorded.

Participation in this study is voluntary and STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. Your interview will be given a code number so that your responses are anonymous. No names of people or places will be included in the research findings.

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

If you are still willing to participate in the research, please sign your name below.

Signed.....

Date.....

(Please print name).....

Researcher.....

### **Consent Form B (parent or guardian)**

Department of Law and Criminology  
University of Aberystwyth  
Hugh Owen Building  
Penglais  
Aberystwyth  
SY23 3DY

Contact: Claudine Young  
Mobile: \*\*\*\*\*

### **A study into perceptions and experiences of crime in your area, \*\*\*\*\***

My research at Aberystwyth University involves studying what it is like to live in your area, and especially how crime and anti-social behaviour affects peoples' lives. An important part of the study is to listen to people talk about their experiences and understanding of these issues.

Thank you for agreeing for your child to take part in this study. If you or your child have any questions about the study, or if there is something you or your child are not sure about, please ask the interviewer to discuss this with you both before signing the consent form.

I would like to remind you that participation in this study involves an interview that will take approximately one hour of your child's time; however there may be a follow-up interview at a later date. Subject to your consent, these interviews will be tape recorded.

Participation in this study is voluntary and **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**, unless your child discloses information that puts him or herself or other people at risk. Your child's interview

will be given a code number so that their responses are anonymous. No names of people or places will be included in the research findings.

Your child is free to withdraw from the study at any time.

If you are still willing for your child to participate in the research, please sign your name below.

Signed.....

Parent/Guardian\*

Date.....

(Please print name).....

Researcher.....

### **Consent Form C - child**

Department of Law and Criminology  
University of Aberystwyth  
Hugh Owen Building  
Penglais  
Aberystwyth  
SY23 3DY

Contact: Claudine Young  
Mobile: \*\*\*\*\*

### **A study into perceptions and experiences of crime in your area, \*\*\*\*\***

My research at Aberystwyth University involves studying what it is like to live in your area, and especially how crime and anti-social behaviour affects peoples' lives. An important part of the study is to listen to people talk about their experiences and understanding of these issues.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study. If you or your parent or guardian have any questions about the study, or if there is something you are not sure about, please ask the interviewer to discuss this with you before signing the consent form.

I would like to remind you that taking part in this study involves an interview that will take approximately one hour of your time; however there may be a follow-up interview at a later date. If you agree to it, these interviews will be tape recorded.

Taking part in this study is voluntary and STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL, unless you decide to tell me something which might put you or another person in danger. Then another adult who deals with such things will have to be told, such as a social worker or police officer. Your interview will be given a code number so that your responses are anonymous. No names of people (including your name or your friends' names) or places will be included in the research findings.

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

If you are still willing to take part in the research, please sign your name below.

Signed.....

Date.....

(Please print name).....

Researcher.....

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